



Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report

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Chapter 5

Law enforcement and juvenile crime



For most delinquents, law enforcement is the doorway to the juvenile justice system. Once a juvenile is apprehended for a law violation, it is the police officer who first determines if the juvenile will move deeper into the justice system or will be diverted.

Law enforcement agencies track the volume and characteristics of crimes reported to them and use this information to monitor the changing levels of crime in their communities. Not all crimes are reported to law enforcement, and most of those that are reported remain unsolved. Law enforcement's new incident-based reporting systems include victim reports of offender characteristics in crimes in which the victim sees the offender; for these crimes, even when there is no arrest, law enforcement records can be used to develop an understanding of juvenile offending. For all other types of crimes, an understanding of juvenile involvement comes through the study of arrest statistics. Arrest statistics can monitor the flow of juveniles and adults

into the justice system and are the most frequently cited source of information on juvenile crime trends.

This chapter describes the volume and characteristics of juvenile crime from law enforcement's perspective. It presents information on the number and offense characteristics of juvenile arrests in 2003 and historical trends in juvenile arrests. This chapter also examines arrests and arrest trends for female juvenile offenders and offenders under age 13 and compares arrest trends for males and females and different racial groups. It includes arrest rate trends for many specific offenses, including murder and other violent crimes, property crimes, and drug and weapons offenses. The majority of data presented in this chapter were originally compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation as part of its Uniform Crime Reporting Program, which includes the Supplementary Homicide Reports and the National Incident-Based Reporting System.

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program monitors law enforcement's response to juvenile crime

Since the 1930s, police agencies have reported to the Uniform Crime Reporting Program

Each year, thousands of police agencies voluntarily report the following data to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program:

- Number of Index crimes reported to law enforcement (see sidebar).
- Number of arrests and the most serious charge involved in each arrest.
- Age, gender, and race of arrestees.
- Proportion of reported Index crimes cleared by arrest and the proportion of these Index crimes cleared by the arrest of persons under age 18.
- Police dispositions of juvenile arrests.
- Detailed victim, assailant, and circumstance information in murder cases.

What can the UCR arrest data tell us about crime and young people?

The UCR arrest data can provide estimates of the annual number of arrests of juveniles* within specific offense categories. UCR data can also provide detail on juvenile arrests by gender, race, and type of location (urban, suburban, or rural area). The data can be used to compare

the relative number of arrests of adults and juveniles within offense categories, to develop estimates of change in arrests over various time periods, and to monitor the proportion of crimes cleared by arrests of juveniles.

What do UCR data count?

UCR data document the number of crimes reported to police, not the number committed. The UCR Program monitors the number of Index crimes that come to the attention of law enforcement agencies. Although this information is useful in identifying trends in the volume of reported crime, it is important to recognize that not all crimes are brought to the attention of law enforcement.

Crimes are more likely to be reported if they involve a serious injury or a large economic loss and if the victim wants law enforcement involved in the matter. Therefore, some crimes are more likely to come to the attention of law enforcement than are others. For example, the National Crime Victimization Survey for 2003 found that victims reported 77% of motor vehicle thefts to police, 61% of robberies, 59% of aggravated assaults, 54% of burglaries, 42% of simple assaults, 39% of sexual assaults, and 32% of thefts. Overall, victims reported to law enforcement 48% of violent crimes and 38% of property crimes.

Changes in the proportion of crimes reported may, therefore, reflect more than changes in the number of crimes actually committed. They may also reflect changes in the willingness of victims to report crimes to law enforcement agencies.

Another important aspect of UCR data is that they document the number of arrests made, not the number of persons arrested. A person can

What are the Crime Indexes?

The designers of the UCR Program wanted to create indexes (similar in concept to the Dow Jones Industrial Average and the Consumer Price Index) that would be sensitive to changes in the volume and nature of reported crime. They decided to incorporate specific offenses into these indexes based on several factors: likelihood of being reported, frequency of occurrence, pervasiveness in all geographical areas of the country, and relative seriousness.

Violent Crime Index—Includes murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Property Crime Index—Includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

Crime Index—Includes all eight crimes in the Violent Crime Index and Property Crime Index.

A substantial proportion of the crimes in the Property Crime Index are generally considered less serious crimes, such as shoplifting, theft from motor vehicles, and bicycle theft, all of which are included in the larceny-theft category. The Violent Crime Index contains what are generally considered to be serious crimes, although some violent crimes, such as kidnapping and extortion, are excluded. However, significant changes in a community's violent crime problem (e.g., a doubling in the number of murders) may not be reflected in the Violent Crime Index because these murder counts could be overwhelmed by small declines in the higher volume violent crimes of robbery and aggravated assault. For this and other reasons, the FBI is considering revisions to the current indexes.

* In this chapter, "juvenile" refers to persons under age 18. This definition is different from the legal definition of juveniles in 2003 in 13 states—10 states where all 17-year-olds are defined as adults and 3 states where all 16- and 17-year-olds are defined as adults.

be arrested more than once in a year. Each arrest is counted separately in the UCR data. One arrest can represent many crimes. If a person were arrested for allegedly committing 40 burglaries, it would show up in the UCR data as one arrest for burglary. Also, one crime may result in multiple arrests. For example, three youth may be arrested for one burglary. A single crime with multiple arrests is more likely to occur with juveniles than with adult offenders because juveniles are more likely than adults to commit crimes in groups.

UCR arrest data reflect only the most serious offense for which a person was arrested. An arrest of a person for both aggravated assault and weapons possession would appear in the UCR data as one aggravated assault arrest. The UCR data on number of weapons arrests, therefore, reflect only those arrests in which a weapons charge was the most serious offense charged. This aspect of UCR counting rules must be taken into consideration when the data are used in analysis of arrest volume and trends for less serious offenses.

Clearance data provide another perspective on law enforcement. A crime is considered cleared if someone is charged with the crime or if someone is believed to have committed the crime but for some reason (e.g., the death of the suspect, unwillingness of the victim to prosecute) an arrest cannot be made. If a person is arrested and charged with committing 40 burglaries, UCR records 40 burglary clearances. If three people are arrested for robbing a liquor store, UCR records one robbery cleared.

Dividing the number of crimes cleared by the number of crimes reported in a year gives an estimate

of the proportion of crimes cleared in a year. Historically, a greater proportion of violent crimes than property crimes are cleared.

Most serious offense	Proportion of crimes cleared in 2003
Violent Crime Index	47%
Murder	62
Forcible rape	44
Robbery	26
Aggravated assault	56
Property Crime Index	16
Burglary	13
Larceny-theft	18
Motor vehicle theft	13
Arson	17

UCR data also document the proportion of cleared crimes that were cleared by the arrest of persons under age 18. Assessments of the juvenile contribution to the crime problem are often based on this proportion. It is important to note that clearance and arrest statistics generally give very different pictures of the juvenile contribution to crime.

Most serious offense	2003 juvenile proportion	
	Arrests	Crimes cleared
Violent Crime Index	15%	12%
Murder	9	5
Forcible rape	16	11
Robbery	24	14
Aggravated assault	14	12
Property Crime Index	29	19
Burglary	29	17
Larceny-theft	28	20
Motor vehicle theft	29	17
Arson	51	41

How should juvenile arrest and clearance data be interpreted?

Considerations in interpreting UCR data on juvenile arrests and clearances can be demonstrated by attempting to answer a typical

question about juvenile crime: “In 2003, what proportion of all robberies were committed by juveniles?” The UCR data show that 24% of all arrests for robbery in 2003 were of persons under age 18 and that 14% of all robberies cleared in 2003 were cleared by the arrest of persons under age 18.

The key to reconciling the difference between the two percentages is the fact, noted previously, that juveniles are more likely than adults to commit crimes in groups. If a police department cleared all seven of its robberies in a year by arresting two juveniles for one incident and six different adults for the other six incidents, the juvenile proportion of arrests for robbery would be 25% (2 in 8), and the juvenile proportion of robberies cleared would be 14% (1 in 7). Arrest percentages are offender based; clearance percentages are incident based.

Clearance data are a better choice than arrest data for determining the juvenile proportion of all robberies committed. There are, however, questions about what clearance figures actually represent.

One question stems from the fact that a crime cleared by the arrest of a juvenile and the arrest of an adult is classified by the FBI as an adult clearance. Therefore, some cleared crimes involving juvenile offenders are not counted in the proportion of crimes cleared by juvenile arrest, which makes the juvenile clearance proportion an underestimate of juvenile involvement in cleared crimes.

Another question is whether it is safe to assume that characteristics of robberies cleared are similar to characteristics of robberies not cleared (i.e., whether the 26% of robberies cleared in 2003 were like the 74% not cleared).

A study by Snyder of more than 21,000 robberies in 7 states between 1991 and 1993 found that robberies by juveniles were more likely to result in arrest than were robberies by adults. The FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data from these states gave the victim's perception of the age of the offender and indicated whether the offender was arrested. This study found that robberies by juveniles were 23% more likely to result in arrest than were robberies by adults. Therefore, the juvenile proportion of cleared robberies was substantially greater than the proportion of robberies actually committed by juveniles. Based on this finding, it appears that UCR clearance percentages overestimate the juvenile responsibility for crime because juvenile offenders are more likely to be arrested.

Arrest data and clearance data can be used to explore different types of questions. Arrest data provide a rough estimate of how many juveniles entered the justice system in a given year, but it must be remembered that a particular individual may have been arrested more than once during the year (and therefore counted more than once) and that a particular arrest may have involved more than one offense (with only the most serious charge counted). Clearance data are more useful than arrest data in estimating the proportion of crimes committed by juveniles, but evidence that juveniles are more likely than adults to be arrested for their crimes indicates that clearance percentages also exaggerate juveniles' actual share of crime. However, the most important thing to remember in using arrest and clearance data to analyze juvenile crime trends is that changes in arrest data are likely to reflect

actual changes in the number of juveniles entering the juvenile justice system, whereas changes in clearance proportions can be used to monitor changes in the relative responsibility of juveniles for crime.

What is the accuracy of the UCR-based juvenile arrest and clearance trends?

Annually, the FBI generates national estimates of reported crimes for the 8 Index offenses and national estimates of total arrests in 29 offense categories. It does not currently produce national estimates of juvenile arrests, but recently it has revived production of juvenile arrest rates for selected offenses. These estimates are all based on data reported to the FBI by contributing law enforcement agencies in a given year. Statisticians characterize these annual samples as "opportunistic" samples—i.e., each sample contains data from every agency that was willing and able to report to the FBI in that year. The essential problem is that the sample is not scientifically determined; therefore, no one can assume that the sample's characteristics (e.g., juvenile arrest proportions, juvenile arrest rates) are representative of all law enforcement agencies in the U.S.

For example, assume that one sample contained a disproportionate number of agencies from large metropolitan areas or cities. In that case, the arrest tables in the FBI's UCR-based report *Crime in the United States* would present a picture of juvenile arrests with a more urban character compared with the U.S. as a whole. The data from the reporting sample would have a higher percentage of violent crime arrests, a higher percentage of juvenile arrests, higher rates of juvenile

arrests for violent crimes, and higher proportions and rates of arrest of black juveniles across offense categories.

The quality of the juvenile arrest rate trends derived from the sample data reported in *Crime in the United States* is dependent on the consistent representativeness of the annual reporting samples, and the FBI does not currently assess this representativeness. What is known is that the coverage of the sample has changed substantially in recent years. For 2003, law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over 70% of the U.S. population contributed data on arrests; between 1980 and 2003, this proportion ranged from 63% to 86%.

The traditional approach to the development of national estimates of juvenile arrests (and clearances) is based on the assumption that the reporting samples in the *Crime in the United States* series are nationally representative. The more this assumption is violated, the less reliable are the estimates. It is possible to adjust for some of the known, or measurable, biases in the samples, but this work has not been done. Even if such adjustments were made, the validity of the estimates would still be in question because of the inherent weaknesses of an opportunistic sample.

From a pragmatic standpoint, those who wish to study arrest and clearance trends should turn to the FBI's UCR Program and its *Crime in the United States* reports. This resource is the best information available, even though it has weaknesses. Users, however, should always be aware of the potential biases in the data and the potential effects of these biases.

In 2003, law enforcement agencies reported 2.2 million arrests of persons under age 18

The most serious charge in almost half of all juvenile arrests in 2003 was larceny-theft, simple assault, a drug abuse violation, disorderly conduct, or a liquor law violation

Most serious offense	2003 juvenile arrest estimates	Percent of total juvenile arrests					
		Female	Ages 16–17	White	Black	American Indian	Asian
Total	2,220,300	29%	68%	71%	27%	1%	2%
Violent Crime Index	92,300	18	67	53	45	1	1
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	1,130	9	89	49	48	1	2
Forcible rape	4,240	2	63	64	33	2	1
Robbery	25,440	9	75	35	63	0	2
Aggravated assault	61,490	24	64	59	38	1	1
Property Crime Index	463,300	32	63	69	28	1	2
Burglary	85,100	12	65	71	26	1	1
Larceny-theft	325,600	39	62	70	27	1	2
Motor vehicle theft	44,500	17	75	56	40	1	2
Arson	8,200	12	39	81	17	1	1
Other (simple) assault	241,900	32	57	61	36	1	1
Forgery and counterfeiting	4,700	35	87	77	20	1	2
Fraud	8,100	33	82	66	32	1	1
Embezzlement	1,200	40	94	68	30	0	2
Stolen property (buying, receiving, possessing)	24,300	15	73	57	41	1	1
Vandalism	107,700	14	56	80	18	1	1
Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)	39,200	11	64	66	32	1	2
Prostitution and commercialized vice	1,400	69	86	51	47	0	1
Sex offense (except forcible rape and prostitution)	18,300	9	49	71	26	1	1
Drug abuse violation	197,100	16	83	72	26	1	1
Gambling	1,700	2	85	12	86	0	2
Offenses against family and children	7,000	39	65	77	20	2	2
Driving under the influence	21,000	20	98	94	4	2	1
Liquor laws	136,900	35	90	92	4	3	1
Drunkenness	17,600	23	87	89	8	2	1
Disorderly conduct	193,000	31	59	64	34	1	1
Vagrancy	2,300	25	75	62	37	1	1
All other offenses (except traffic)	379,800	27	72	74	23	1	2
Suspicion	1,500	24	74	66	33	1	0
Curfew and loitering law violation	136,500	30	71	68	30	1	1
Runaway	123,600	59	64	73	20	2	5
U.S. population ages 10–17	33,499,000	49	24	78	16	1	4

■ Females accounted for the majority of arrests for running away from home (59%) and prostitution and commercialized vice (69%).

■ Black youth, who accounted for 16% of the juvenile population in 2003, were involved in a disproportionate number of juvenile arrests for robbery (63%), murder (48%), motor vehicle theft (40%), and aggravated assault (38%).

Notes: UCR data do not distinguish the ethnic group Hispanic; Hispanics may be of any race. In 2003, 92% of Hispanics ages 10–17 were classified racially as white. National estimates of juvenile arrests were developed using FBI estimates of total arrests and juvenile arrest proportions in the reporting sample. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Crime in the United States 2003*.

In 2003, 15% of male arrests and 20% of female arrests involved a person younger than age 18

Based on arrest proportions, the juvenile involvement in crime varies substantially by the type of offense

Most serious offense	Juvenile arrests as a percent of total arrests						
	All	Male	Female	White	Black	American Indian	Asian
Total	16%	15%	20%	16%	16%	16%	22%
Violent Crime Index	15	15	16	13	19	14	18
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	9	9	8	9	9	10	12
Forcible rape	16	16	24	16	16	20	12
Robbery	24	24	20	19	27	19	32
Aggravated assault	14	13	16	13	16	13	15
Property Crime Index	29	28	30	29	27	35	37
Burglary	29	30	25	30	28	36	37
Larceny-theft	28	27	30	29	26	34	38
Motor vehicle theft	29	29	30	27	33	40	34
Arson	51	53	40	53	41	52	58
Other (simple) assault	19	17	26	18	22	16	21
Forgery and counterfeiting	4	5	4	5	3	6	5
Fraud	3	3	2	3	3	3	6
Embezzlement	7	8	6	7	7	5	9
Stolen property (buying, receiving, possessing)	19	20	16	18	21	25	25
Vandalism	39	41	33	41	33	35	38
Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)	23	23	32	25	20	22	34
Prostitution and commercialized vice	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
Sex offense (except forcible rape and prostitution)	20	20	22	19	22	13	20
Drug abuse violation	12	12	11	13	9	16	15
Gambling	16	17	3	7	19	20	8
Offenses against family and children	5	4	9	6	3	7	7
Driving under the influence	1	1	2	2	1	2	1
Liquor laws	22	20	30	24	11	23	25
Drunkenness	3	3	5	3	2	3	5
Disorderly conduct	30	28	37	29	34	22	37
Vagrancy	8	8	9	9	7	2	6
All other offenses (except traffic)	10	10	13	12	8	9	13

- In 2003, a juvenile was the alleged offender in 51% of arson, 39% of vandalism, 29% of motor vehicle theft and burglary, 23% of weapons law violation, 12% of drug abuse violation, and 9% of murder arrests.
- Juveniles were involved in a greater proportion of female arrests than male arrests for liquor law violations (30% vs. 20%), simple assault (26% vs. 17%), weapons law violations (32% vs. 23%), and disorderly conduct (37% vs. 28%).
- Overall, in 2003, 16% of white arrests and 16% of black arrests involved a person younger than age 18. However, for some offenses, juveniles were involved in a greater proportion of black arrests than white arrests (e.g., robbery and motor vehicle theft). For other offenses, juvenile involvement was greater in white arrests than black arrests (e.g., liquor law violations, arson, and vandalism).

Source: Authors' adaptation of the FBI's *Crime in the United States 2003*.

Between 1994 and 2003, juvenile arrests for violent crime fell proportionately more than adult arrests

Over the 10-year period from 1994 to 2003, the percent decline in the number of arrests was greater for juveniles than for adults for each offense within the Violent Crime Index

Most serious offense	Percent change in arrests, 1994–2003								
	All persons			Juveniles			Adults		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Total	–3%	–7%	12%	–18%	–22%	–3%	1%	–3%	17%
Violent Crime Index	–16	–20	10	–32	–36	–10	–12	–16	14
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	–36	–37	–30	–68	–69	–49	–30	–30	–28
Forcible rape	–22	–23	–1	–25	–25	–30	–22	–22	12
Robbery	–25	–26	–12	–43	–44	–38	–17	–18	–2
Aggravated assault	–12	–17	14	–26	–31	–2	–10	–15	17
Property Crime Index	–23	–27	–12	–38	–44	–21	–15	–18	–8
Burglary	–23	–26	–3	–40	–41	–27	–14	–17	9
Larceny–theft	–23	–27	–14	–35	–43	–19	–16	–19	–11
Motor vehicle theft	–26	–30	–5	–52	–54	–44	–6	–12	34
Arson	–29	–29	–24	–36	–36	–38	–18	–19	–10
Other (simple) assault	3	–4	32	10	1	36	1	–5	31
Forgery and counterfeiting	1	–4	10	–47	–46	–47	6	0	16
Fraud	–17	–21	–12	–29	–29	–27	–16	–20	–11
Embezzlement	19	2	42	15	8	28	19	2	43
Stolen property (buying, receiving, possessing)	–21	–25	6	–46	–48	–29	–11	–16	18
Vandalism	–18	–21	5	–33	–36	–11	–3	–7	16
Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)	–36	–36	–34	–41	–42	–22	–35	–34	–38
Prostitution and commercialized vice	–18	–22	–15	31	–24	86	–18	–22	–16
Sex offenses (except forcible rape and prostitution)	–10	–10	–3	2	0	26	–12	–13	–9
Drug abuse violation	22	20	35	19	13	56	23	21	33
Gambling	–49	–51	–37	–59	–58	–70	–48	–50	–35
Offenses against family and children	11	4	41	19	12	31	10	4	42
Driving under the influence	–6	–10	21	33	25	83	–6	–11	20
Liquor laws	16	8	45	4	–5	26	20	12	56
Drunkenness	–26	–28	–9	–11	–18	24	–26	–28	–10
Disorderly conduct	–11	–16	4	13	2	46	–19	–21	–11
Vagrancy	16	17	10	–50	–53	–37	32	36	20
All other offenses (except traffic)	17	12	38	–2	–8	17	19	14	42
Curfew and loitering law violation	–1	–3	5	–1	–3	5	NA	NA	NA
Runaway	–42	–44	–40	–42	–44	–40	NA	NA	NA

- Between 1994 and 2003, female juvenile arrests either increased more or decreased less than male juvenile arrests in many offense categories (e.g., driving under the influence, drug abuse violations, simple assault, liquor law violations, and aggravated assault). As a result, while male juvenile arrests declined 22% over the period, female juvenile arrests declined just 3%.
- Between 1994 and 2003, while both juvenile and adult male arrests for simple assault changed little (1% and –5%, respectively), arrests for both juvenile and adult females increased substantially (36% and 31%, respectively). This implies that the increase in juvenile female arrests for simple assault over the period was a trend for females in general, not for juvenile females specifically.

Source: Authors' adaptation of the FBI's *Crime in the United States 2003*.

The female proportion of youth entering the juvenile justice system for law violations has increased

Gender-specific factors influence juvenile arrest trends

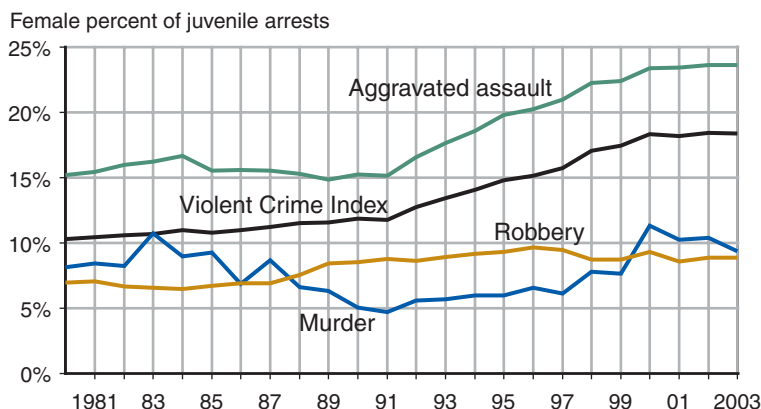
If juvenile males and females were contributing equally to an arrest trend, then the female proportion of juvenile arrests would remain constant. If, however, the female proportion changes, that means that the female arrest trend differs from the male trend—and any explanation of juvenile arrest trends must incorporate factors that affect males and females differently.

A major story in the last few years has been the rise in the proportion of females entering the juvenile justice system. In 1980, 20% of all juvenile arrests were female arrests; in 2003, this percentage had increased to 29%—with the majority of this growth since the early 1990s. The female proportion increased between 1980 and 2003 in juvenile arrests for Violent Crime Index offenses (from 10% to 18%) and for Property Crime Index offenses (from 19% to 32%); however, the female proportion of drug abuse violations arrests was the same in 1980 and 2003 (16%). This implies there were (1) different factors influencing the volume and/or nature of law-violating behaviors by male and female juveniles over this time period and/or (2) differential responses by law enforcement to these behaviors.

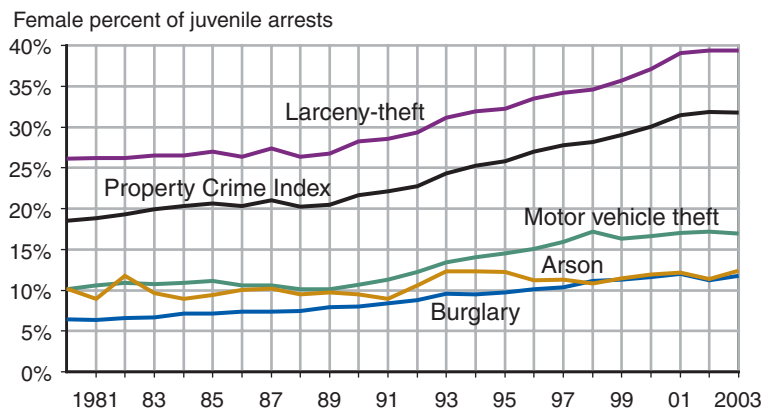
A closer look at violence trends points to possible explanations

If juvenile females had simply become more violent, the female proportion of juvenile arrests would be expected to have increased for each violent crime. This did not occur. For example, the female proportion of juvenile arrests remained relatively constant between 1980 and 2003 for robbery (7% to 9%). The

Between 1980 and 2003, the female percentage of juvenile violent crime arrests increased, with the overall increase tied mainly to aggravated assault arrests



The female percentage of juvenile arrests increased between 1980 and 2003 for each of the four Property Crime Index offenses



Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the years 1980 through 2003.

change that caused the Violent Crime Index proportion to increase between 1980 and 2003 was the increase in the female proportion of juvenile arrests for aggravated assault (from 15% to 24%). Similarly, a large increase was seen in the

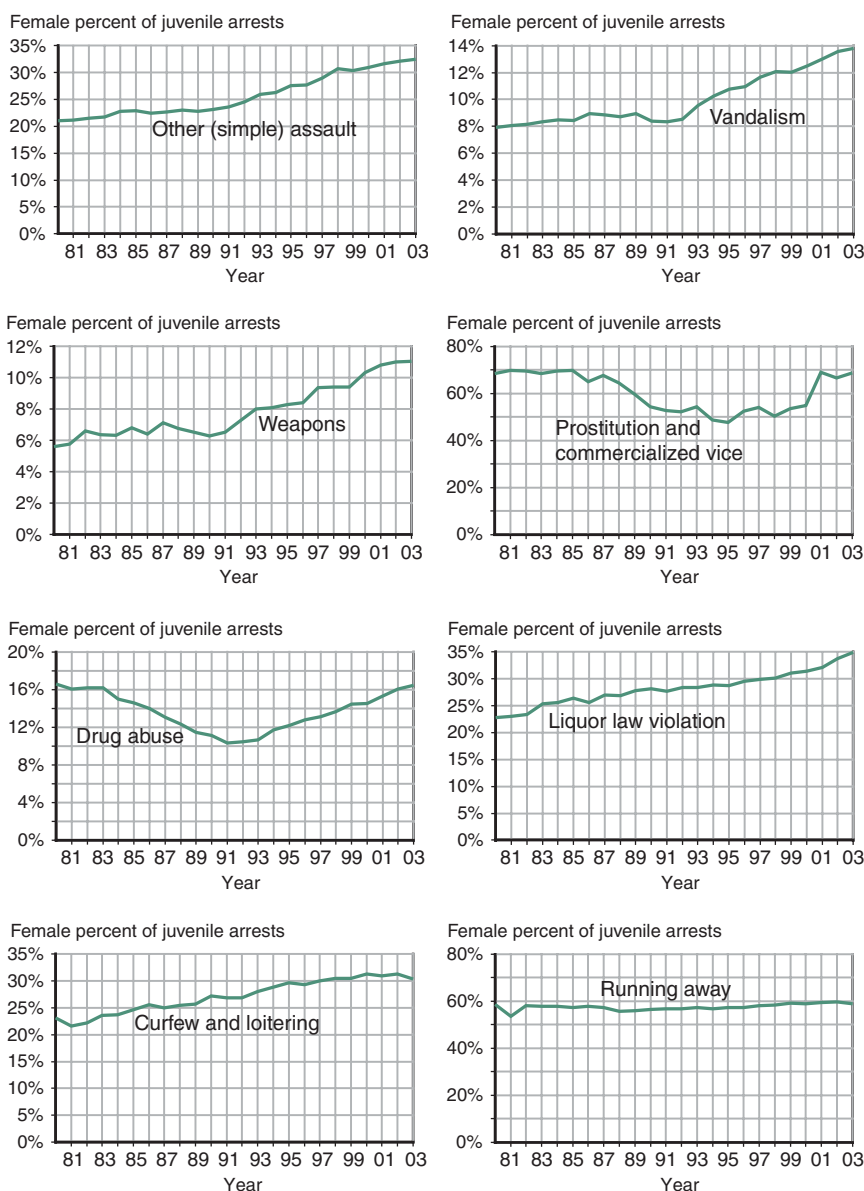
female proportion of juvenile arrests for simple assault (from 21% to 32%). To understand the relative increase in female arrests for violence, it is necessary to look for factors related primarily to assault.

One possible explanation for this pattern could be the changing response of law enforcement to domestic violence incidents. Domestic assaults represent a larger proportion of female violence than male violence. For example, analysis of the 2001 NIBRS data finds that 18% of aggravated assaults known to law enforcement committed by juvenile males were against family members or intimate partners, compared with 33% of aggravated assaults committed by juvenile females. Mandatory arrest laws for domestic violence, coupled with an increased willingness to report these crimes to authorities, would yield a greater increase in female than male arrests for assault, while having no effect on the other violent crimes. Thus, policy and social changes may be a stimulus for the increased proportion of juvenile female arrests.

The female proportion of arrests increased for many offenses

When the female proportion of juvenile arrests remains constant over time, factors controlling this arrest trend are unrelated to gender. This pattern is seen in juvenile robbery and arson arrests from 1980 through 2003. Over this period, the female arrest proportions for some other offenses (e.g., murder, prostitution, and drug abuse violations) first declined and then increased back to earlier levels. However, for most other offenses (e.g., aggravated assault, simple assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, vandalism, weapons, liquor, and curfew/loitering law violations), the female proportions of juvenile arrests increased substantially over the 1980–2003 period.

Between 1980 and 2003, the female proportion of juvenile arrests increased for simple assault, vandalism, weapons, liquor law violations, and curfew and loitering law violations



- Between 1980 and 2003, the large decline and subsequent growth in the female proportion of juvenile arrests for drug abuse violations reflected a decline in the female arrest rate for drug abuse violations during the 1980s and early 1990s while the male rate generally held constant, followed by a proportionately greater increase in the female rate after the early 1990s.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the years 1980 through 2003.

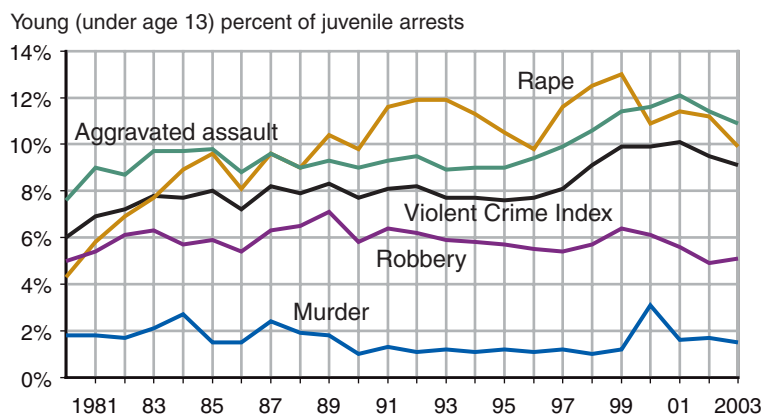
Violent and drug arrest rates for young juveniles rose from 1980 to 2003 as their overall arrest rate fell

Arrest rates for very young juveniles declined for some offenses, increased for others

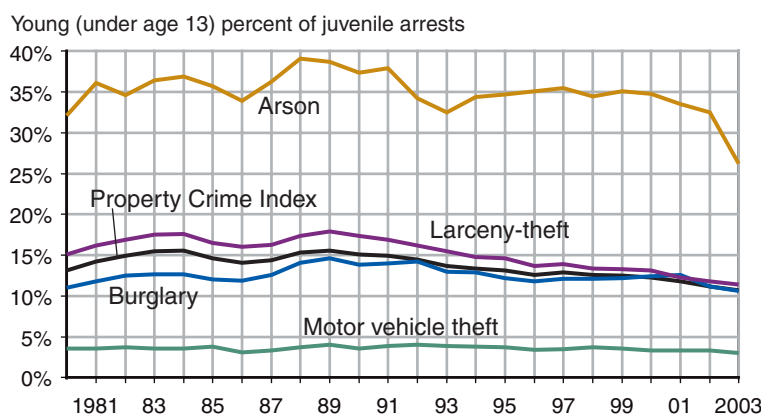
A common perception in the last few years was that the rate and proportion of young juveniles (under age 13) entering the juvenile justice system had increased. This statement is not true. In 1980, there were an estimated 1,476 arrests of persons ages 10–12 for every 100,000 persons in this age group in the U.S. population. By 2003, this arrest rate had fallen to 1,296, a decline of 12%. In 1980, 9.5% of all juvenile arrests were arrests of persons under age 13; in 2003, this percentage had decreased to 8.5%—with the majority of the decrease occurring during the mid-1990s.

However, while the overall arrest rate for young juveniles declined, arrests for some offenses increased dramatically, and the types of young juvenile offenders entering the juvenile justice system changed. For example, the Property Crime Index arrest rate for juveniles ages 10–12 fell 51% between 1980 and 2003. Over the same period, the Violent Crime Index arrest rate increased 27%. As a result, while the overall rate of young juvenile arrests fell, a larger proportion of those arrested were arrested for a violent crime. Over the period 1980–2003, the arrest rate for juveniles ages 10–12 fell for burglary (68%), larceny-theft (47%), vandalism (37%), and running away from home (45%). Over the same period, the arrest rate for young juveniles increased for aggravated assault (91%), simple assault (197%), weapons law violations (138%), sex offenses (121%), drug abuse violations (105%), disorderly conduct (116%), and curfew and loitering law violations (126%). As a result, even though the overall arrest rate declined, more young juveniles entered the juvenile justice system

While the overall proportion of juvenile arrests involving youth younger than age 13 declined from 1980 to 2003, their proportion of juvenile Violent Crime Index arrests grew from 6% to 9%



The proportion of juvenile Property Crime Index arrests involving youth younger than age 13 declined from 16% in the late 1980s to 11% in 2003



Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the years 1980 through 2003.

charged with violent and drug offenses in 2003 than in 1980. This implies there were (1) different factors influencing the volume and/or nature of law-violating behavior by young juveniles over this time period and/or (2) differential responses by law enforcement to these behaviors.

Arrest rates of young females outpace those of young males

The 12% decline in the total arrest rate for youth ages 10–12 between 1980 and 2003 was a combination of a 20% decline in the young male arrest rate and a 22% increase in the young female arrest rate. For most

offenses, the arrest rate for young females either increased more or decreased less from 1980 to 2003 than the arrest rate for young males. As a result, a greater number and proportion of the young juvenile arrestees in 2003 were female than in 1980, and these females had very different offending patterns compared with 1980.

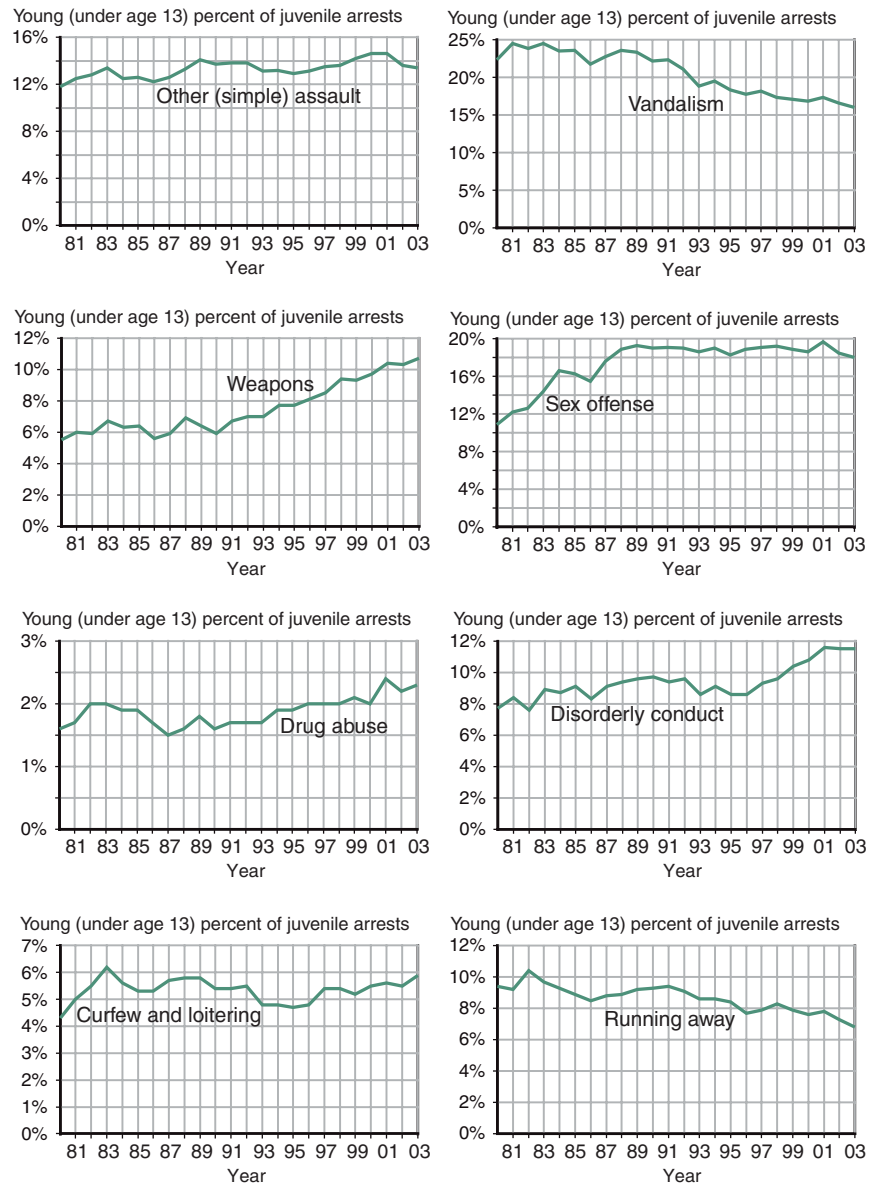
Percent change in young juvenile (ages 10–12) arrest rate, 1980–2003:

Offense	Male	Female
All offenses	–20%	22%
Violent Crime Index	14	135
Aggravated assault	75	186
Property Crime Index	–57	–28
Burglary	–69	–49
Larceny-theft	–54	–26
Simple assault	174	284
Stolen property	–51	21
Vandalism	–42	26
Weapons violation	119	522
Sex offense	116	186
Drug abuse violation	95	143
Disorderly conduct	89	244
Curfew	101	228
Runaway	–51	–36

Analysis of race-specific arrest rate trends for very young juveniles is not possible

The FBI's UCR Program captures information on the gender of arrestees subdivided into a large set of detailed age groups (e.g., under 10, 10–12, 13–14, 15, 16, and 17). It also captures information on the race of arrestees, but the only age breakdown associated with these counts is "under 18" and "18 and above." Therefore, age-specific arrest trends for racial groups, including trends for young juveniles, cannot be analyzed with UCR data.

Between 1980 and 2003, the proportion of juvenile arrests involving youth younger than age 13 increased for weapons, sex, and drug offenses and disorderly conduct



- In 1980, a greater proportion of juvenile simple assault arrests than aggravated assault arrests involved youth under age 13 (12% vs. 8%); this difference narrowed between 1980 and 2003 (to 13% vs. 11%) because the proportion of juvenile arrests involving youth under age 13 increased more for aggravated assault than for simple assault.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the years 1980 through 2003.

In 2003, the juvenile violent crime arrest rate was lower than it was before its increase in the late 1980s

The juvenile violent crime arrest rate is at its lowest level in a generation

Between 1980 and 1988, the juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate was essentially constant. The rate began to increase in 1989; by 1994, it was 61% above its 1988 level. This unsettling trend triggered speculation that the nature of juvenile offenders had changed and spurred state legislators to pass laws that made sanctioning youth in the adult justice system easier. After 1994, however, the juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate fell consistently for the next 9 years; by 2003, it had fallen below the levels of the early 1980s.

The female violent crime arrest rate remains relatively high

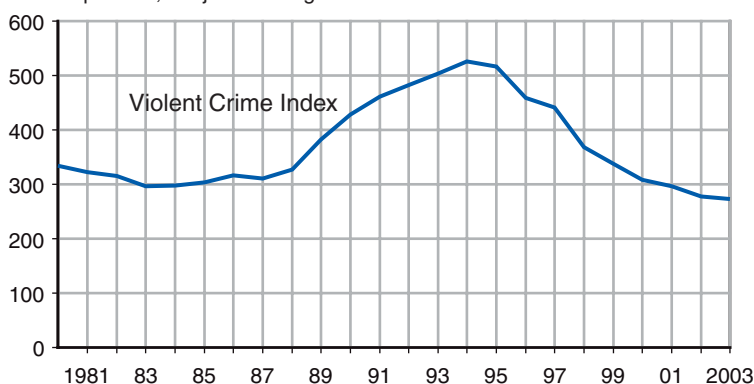
In 1980, the male juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate was 8.3 times the female rate. With only a few exceptions, this gender disparity declined annually between 1980 and 2003, so that by 2003, the male rate was just 4.2 times the female rate. In the growth period between 1988 and 1994, the female rate increased more than the male rate (98% vs. 56%). The decline in the juvenile violent crime arrest rate between 1994 and 2003 was driven primarily by the male arrest rate, which fell more than the female rate (51% vs. 32%). The convergence in the male and female rates between 1980 and 2003 reflects an overall 26% decline in the male rate coupled with a 47% increase in the female rate.

Violent crime arrest rates declined more for black youth than other racial groups

All racial groups experienced large increases in their juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate between

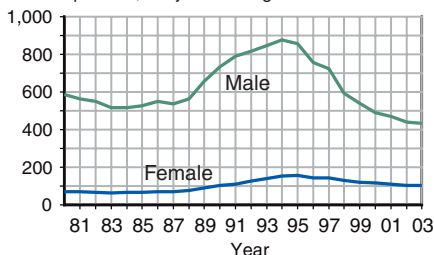
By 2003, the juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate had fallen to the levels of the late 1980s—but not for females

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

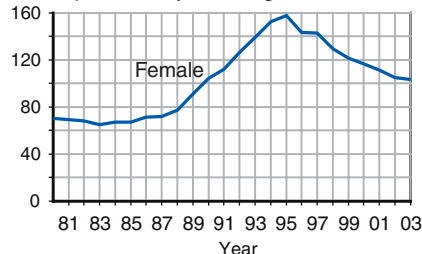


Violent Crime Index arrest rate trends by gender and race

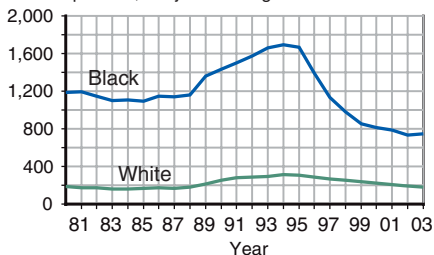
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



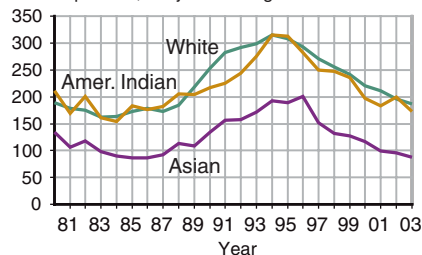
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

1988 and 1994—and large declines between 1994 and 2003. By 2003, the white juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate had returned to its 1988 level. In contrast, the 2003

rates for the other races were all below their 1988 levels: blacks (–35%), American Indian (–16%), and Asian (–23%).

The juvenile arrest rate for murder in 2003 was substantially below any year in the 1980s or 1990s

The juvenile violent crime wave predicted by some in the mid-1990s has not occurred

The extraordinary growth in juvenile arrests for murder between 1987 and 1993 caused some to say and many to believe that America's youth were out of control. The juvenile arrest rate for murder increased 110% over this period, and speculation was that the rate would continue to grow. However, the juvenile arrest rate for murder then declined, more quickly than it had increased, so that by 1998, the rate returned to its 1987 level. After 1998, the rate continued to decline; by 2003, the rate was about half its level in 1987 and 77% below the peak year of 1993. In 2003, juvenile arrests for murder were at a 30-year low.

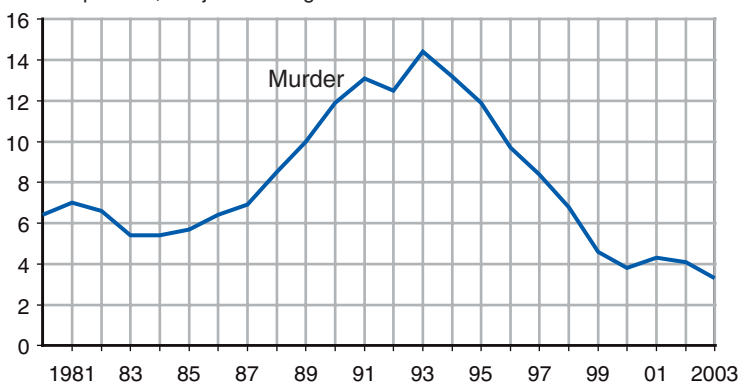
Juvenile murder arrest rates were at generational lows in 2003

During the period from 1980 to 2003, the male juvenile murder arrest rate averaged 12 times the female rate. The growth in the overall juvenile murder arrest rate between 1987 and 1993 was attributable to the large increase (117%) in the much larger male rate. However, during this period, the female rate also increased (36%), although this change had relatively little effect on the overall trend. Both the male and female rates fell substantially between 1993 and 2003 (78% and 62%, respectively). In 2003, both rates were at their lowest levels since at least 1980.

During the period from 1980 through 2003, the black juvenile murder arrest rate averaged more than 6 times the white rate, but their trends over the period were similar. Between 1987 and 1993, both the black rate and the white rate increased substantially (130%

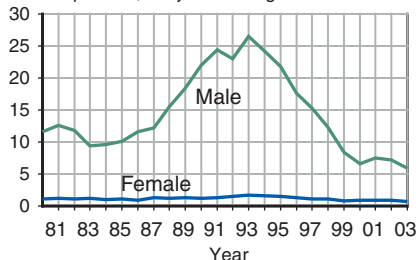
The arrest rate for murder in 2003 was the lowest since at least 1980 for white, black, male, and female juveniles

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

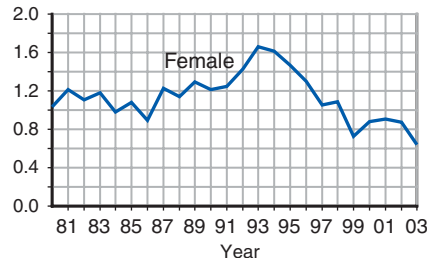


Murder arrest rate trends by gender and race

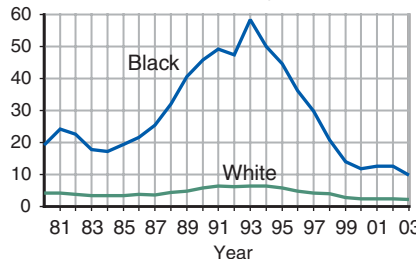
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



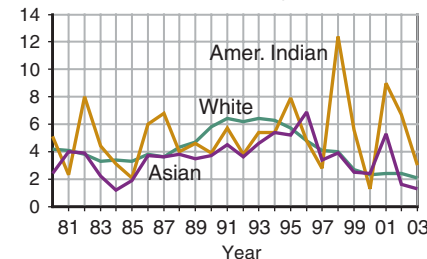
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Note: The murder arrest rate for American Indians fluctuated annually because of the small number of arrests, but the average rate over the period was just a little above the white rate (5.2 vs. 4.2).

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

and 75%, respectively). Both rates then fell dramatically between 1993 and 2003, so that the 2003 juvenile murder arrest rate was far below

the 1987 rate for both black juveniles (–62%) and white juveniles (–43%).

Since 1980, the juvenile arrest rate for rape—and the black-white disparity in the rate—have declined

The forcible rape arrest rate for juveniles in 2003 was at a low for this generation

The FBI's UCR Program defines the crime of forcible rape as the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will, including rapes by force and attempts or assaults to rape, regardless of the age of the victim. The UCR Program classifies other types of violent sexual assaults, including those with male victims and those involving other types of sexual acts (e.g., forcible sodomy), in other offense categories. Most persons arrested in forcible rapes are male. Between 1980 and 2003, more than 98% of all juveniles arrested for forcible rape were male.

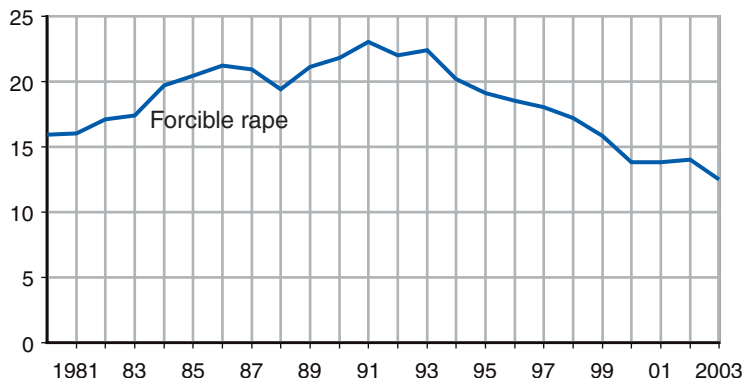
The juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape grew substantially (44%) between 1980 and 1991, a peak year. Unlike other crimes in the Violent Crime Index, the annual number of juvenile arrests for forcible rape began increasing much earlier in the decade, though it peaked near the peak years of the other violent crimes. Like other violent crimes, the juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape fell substantially and consistently between 1993 and 2003, so that in 2003, the rate was 22% of its 1980 level. As with murder, the juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape in 2003 was at its lowest level since at least 1980.

White and black arrest rates converged over the last two decades

In 1980, the black juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape was 7.4 times the white rate; by 2003, the black rate was 2.5 times the white rate. This convergence occurred primarily

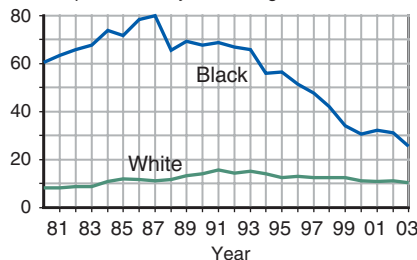
Between 1991 and 2003, the juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape fell 46%, with a larger decline in the black rate than the white rate

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

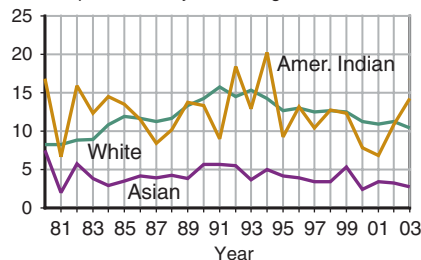


Forcible rape arrest rate trends by race

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Note: The forcible arrest rate for American Indians fluctuated annually because of the small number of arrests, but the average rate over the period was just a little above the white rate (12.3 vs. 11.9).

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

because of the large decline in the black rate.

The white juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape nearly doubled between 1980 and 1991 (up 92%). The black rate also grew in the early 1980s; however, it peaked in 1987, several years before the peak in the white rate—dissimilar to other violent crime patterns. The fall in the

black rate from 1987 through 2003, with few exceptions, was consistent and substantial, falling 68%. The white rate also fell after its peak in the early 1990s, but the fall was far less than the decline in the black rate. As a result, in 2003, the white juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape was 27% above its 1980 level, while the black rate was 58% below its 1980 level.

The substantial growth in the juvenile arrest rate for robbery between 1988 and 1995 was quickly erased

Recent juvenile robbery arrest rates are well below the 1980 level

After falling through most of the 1980s, the juvenile arrest rate for robbery increased sharply in 1989 and continued through its peak years of 1994 and 1995. Over the 6-year period from 1988 through 1994, the juvenile arrest rate for robbery increased 69%, then held constant in 1995 at its highest level. In the next 3 years, the rate dropped precipitously—falling in 1998 to below the 1988 level and erasing the increase of the prior decade. In the years between 1998 and 2003, the juvenile arrest rate for robbery continued to fall, so that in 2003, the rate was just one-third its level in 1995 and less than one-half the level in 1980. If the annual juvenile robbery arrest rate reflects juveniles' relative involvement in this crime, then juveniles in 2003 were committing far fewer robberies than in any year in the 1980s and 1990s.

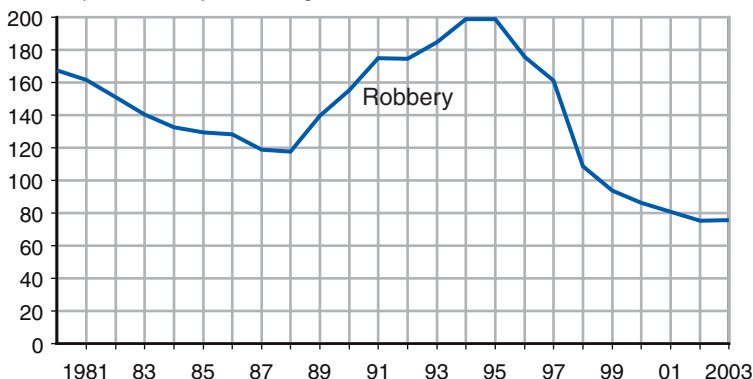
Male, female, white, and black arrest trends for robbery were similar

From 1980 through 2003, trends in the juvenile arrest rates for robbery for males, females, and each racial group were similar, mirroring the pattern of decline, growth, and then substantial decline observed in the overall trend. Over this time period, however, the male rate for robbery averaged 11 times the female rate, with the rates converging slightly over the period.

The black juvenile arrest rate for robbery averaged 12 times the white rate in the 1980s; in the 1990s, the rates converged, resulting in the black rate averaging 7 times the white rate between 2000 and 2003. In the growth period

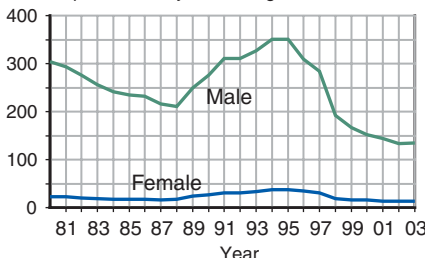
Between 1980 and 2003, the annual juvenile arrest rate for robbery declined substantially, even though a period of growth was embedded in the trend

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

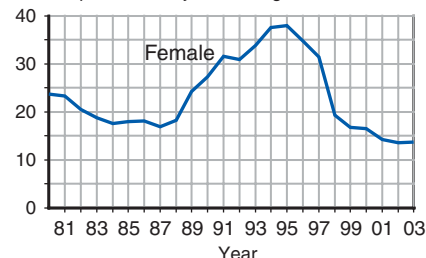


Robbery arrest rate trends by gender and race

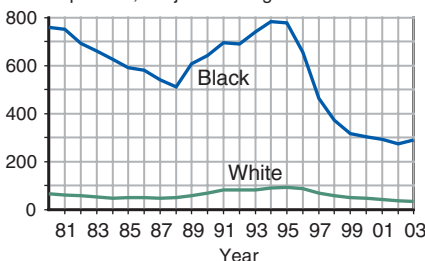
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



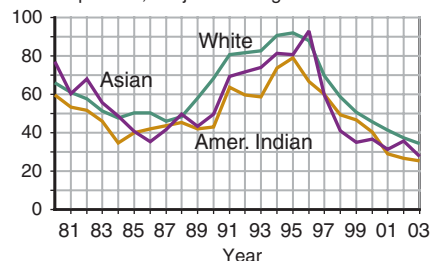
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

between 1988 and 1995, the white rate increased substantially more than the black rate (90% vs. 52%). The declines in the white rate and

black rate between 1995 and 2003 resulted in the 2003 black rate being 62% below its 1980 level and the white rate 48% below its 1980 level.

The juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault declined consistently between 1994 and 2003

The juvenile aggravated assault arrest rate in 2003 was at the level of the late 1980s

The 38% drop in the juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault between 1994 and 2003 erased most, but not all, of the increase the rate had experienced in the prior 10 years. This pattern differs from those for other violent crimes, such as murder, forcible rape, and robbery; the juvenile arrest rate in 2003 for each of these crimes was at, or very near, its lowest level since at least 1980.

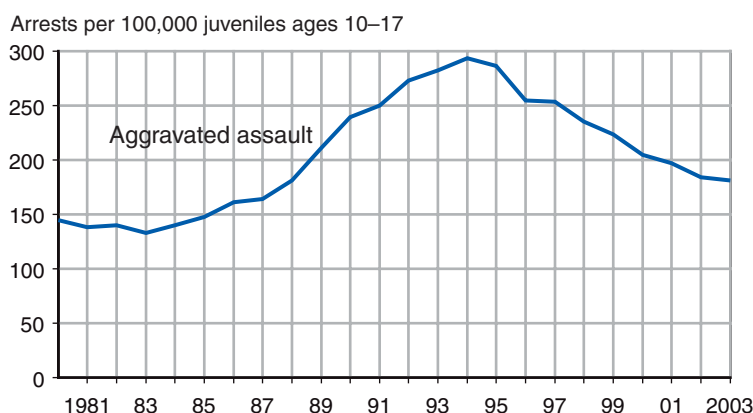
A study of the various components of the juvenile arrest rate trend for aggravated assault reveals contrasts. The simplest way to see this pattern is to examine the growth in the arrest rate between 1980 and 1994 and the decline between 1994 and 2003 for males and females, whites and blacks.

Percent change in aggravated assault arrest rates:

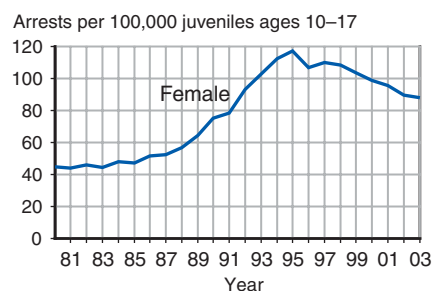
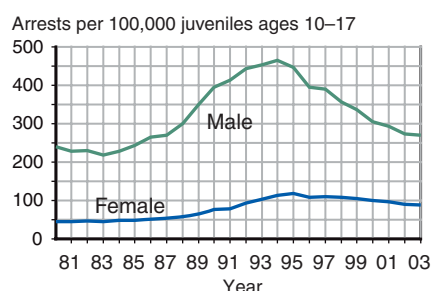
	1980–1994	1994–2003	1980–2003
All	103%	–38%	26%
Male	94	–42	13
Female	150	–22	96
White	84	–32	26
Black	129	–47	21

Large increases in arrest rates between 1980 and 1994 occurred for each of the four subgroups, with the largest for female juveniles and black juveniles. Declines in arrest rates between 1994 and 2003 were also shared by the four subgroups, with the smallest for females. The increases and subsequent declines resulted in the 2003 rates for three of the four subgroups being moderately above their 1980 levels. The exception was the female rate. With the largest increase between 1980 and 1994 and the smallest subsequent decline, the 2003 female arrest rate was nearly double the 1980 rate.

The large growth and subsequent decline in the juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault between 1980 and 2003 illustrate the volatility of juvenile violence levels over a relatively short timeframe



Aggravated assault arrest rate trends by gender and race



- One possible explanation for the differential growth in juvenile female arrest rates over the period is policy changes that encourage arrests in domestic violence incidents. This would affect the female arrest rate for assault proportionally more than the male rate since domestic assaults make up a larger proportion of incidents involving females than of those involving males.

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

From 1998 through 2003, the juvenile arrest rate for property crimes declined sharply

Far fewer juveniles are being arrested for property crimes

From 1980 through 1997, the juvenile arrest rate for Property Crime Index offenses (i.e., the combination of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson arrests) varied little, always remaining within 10% of the average for the 18-year period. However, in 1998, the arrest rate fell below this narrow range and continued to fall annually through 2003. As a result, in 2003, the juvenile arrest rate for Property Crime Index offenses was 39% below its 1997 level.

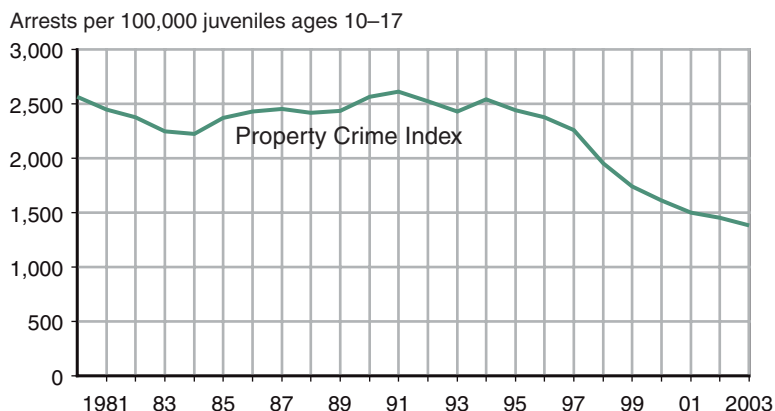
The property crime arrest rate trend for juvenile females is not like the overall pattern

Between 1980 and 2003, the juvenile arrest rate for Property Crime Index offenses fell substantially for most subgroups: males (55%), whites (45%), blacks (52%), American Indians (50%), and Asians (64%). The only exception was juvenile females: between 1980 and 2003, their rate fell only 7%. In 1980, the male arrest rate was 4 times the female rate; by 2003, the male rate was just double the female rate. The clear differences in the male and female Property Crime Index arrest rate trends indicate that factors influencing juvenile law-violating and/or arrest over this period differentially affected males and females.

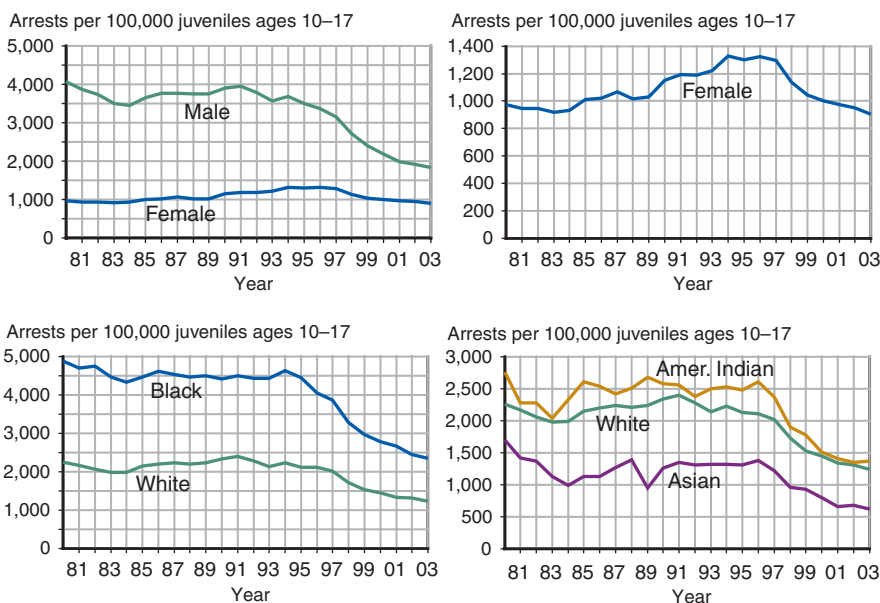
The Property Crime Index arrest trend has limited interpretability

In 2003, 70% of juvenile Property Crime Index arrests were for larceny-theft, 18% for burglary, 10% for motor vehicle theft, and 2% for arson. Thus, Property Crime Index arrest trends are essentially trends in larceny-theft arrests. Large increases in arrests for the other offenses could be easily hidden by small declines in larceny-theft arrests.

The juvenile arrest rate trend for Property Crime Index offenses is used as a general barometer of all property crime arrests of juveniles



Property Crime Index arrest rate trends by gender and race



- In 2003, the Property Crime Index arrest rates were similar for white juveniles (1,237) and American Indian juveniles (1,366), while the Asian rate (614) was half the white rate, and the black rate (2,352) was double the white rate. These comparisons have remained relatively constant since at least 1980.

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

The juvenile arrest rate for burglary in 2003 was just one-third its level in 1980

In 2003, the juvenile arrest rate for burglary reached its lowest point in more than 20 years

The juvenile arrest rate for burglary declined substantially and (with the exception of a few years in the 1980s and 1990s) consistently between 1980 and 2003. Over the period, the juvenile burglary arrest rate fell 68%. Given that the growth in the juvenile population between 1980 and 2003 was marginal (9%), this rate decline means that the justice system processed less than half as many juveniles for burglary in 2003 as it did in 1980.

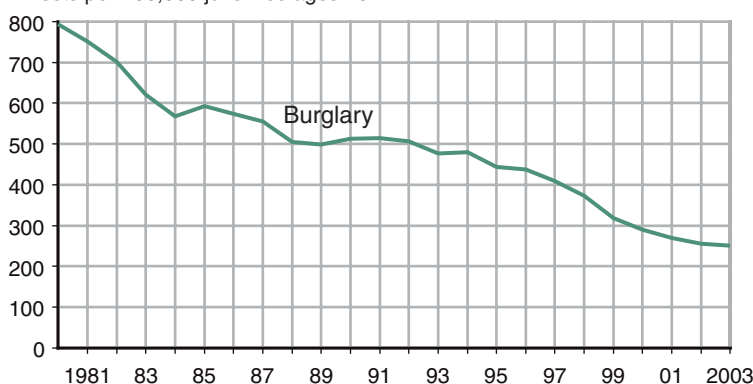
This large decline in burglary arrests was not seen in adult arrests. From 1994 to 2003, while juvenile arrests for burglary fell 40%, adult burglary arrests fell just 14%. In 1980, 45% of all persons arrested for burglary were under age 18; by 2003, this proportion had fallen to 29%. Whatever factors contributed to the decline in burglary arrests had a greater effect on juveniles than adults.

Juvenile female arrest rates for burglary declined less than male rates

The large decline in the juvenile burglary arrest rate was primarily the result of the large decline in the male rate. Between 1980 and 2003, the juvenile male arrest rate for burglary declined 70% while the female rate fell just 41%. As a result, females constituted 6% of all juveniles arrested for burglary in 1980 and 12% in 2003. A closer look at these trends reveals that the male rate essentially declined throughout the entire 1980–2003 period while the female rate held relatively constant from the mid-1980s to the late-1990s and then began to fall.

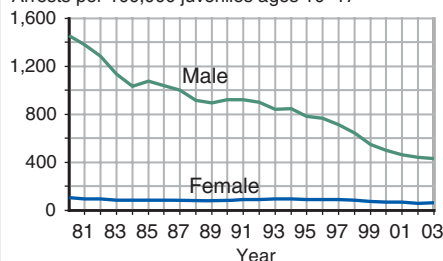
Juveniles in 2003 were far less likely to be arrested for burglary than juveniles 25 years earlier (i.e., their parents' generation)

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

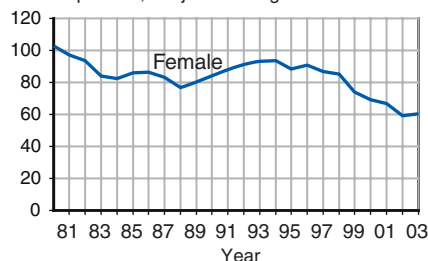


Burglary arrest rate trends by gender and race

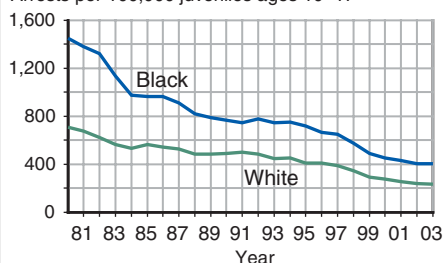
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



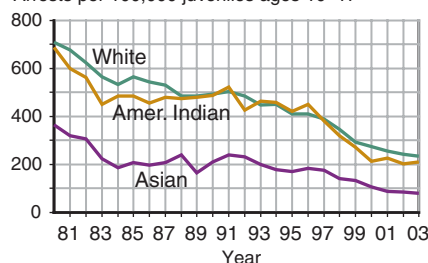
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



- From 1980 through 2003, the juvenile arrest rate for burglary declined substantially and comparably in all racial groups: white (67%), black (72%), American Indian (69%), and Asian (79%).

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

After years of stability, the juvenile arrest rate for larceny-theft declined annually from 1995 to 2003

Juvenile larceny-theft arrest rates fell each year from 1994 to 2003

In 2003, 1 in every 7 juvenile arrests was for larceny-theft. This high-volume crime category is defined as the unlawful taking of property from the possession of another without the use of force, threat, or fraud. It includes offenses such as shoplifting, bicycle theft, theft from a vehicle, or theft from a building or structure where no break-in was involved. The relative stability of the juvenile larceny-theft arrest rate between 1980 and 1994 stands in contrast to the trends in arrests for other property crimes.

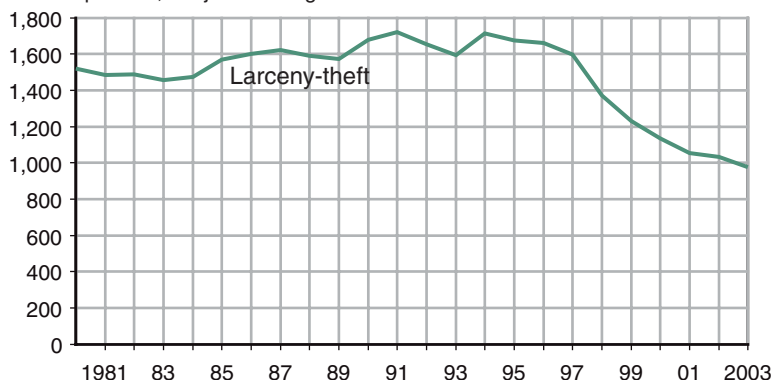
After changing little for more than a decade, the juvenile arrest rate for larceny-theft fell 43% between 1994 and 2003. This large decline in a high-volume offense category translated into more than 350,000 fewer juvenile arrests and a much smaller number of juveniles entering the justice system charged with property crimes.

The female proportion of larceny-theft arrests has grown

In 1980, 26% of juveniles arrested for larceny-theft were female; by 2003, this proportion had grown to 39%. This growth was the result of a 47% decline in the juvenile male arrest rate coupled with a juvenile female arrest rate that essentially did not change (down 4%) between 1980 and 2003. A closer look at these trends finds that while the male rate remained relatively constant between 1980 and the mid-1990s, the female rate increased. Both rates fell between the mid-1990s and 2003, but the female decline followed a growth in the preceding years while the male decline followed a period of stability.

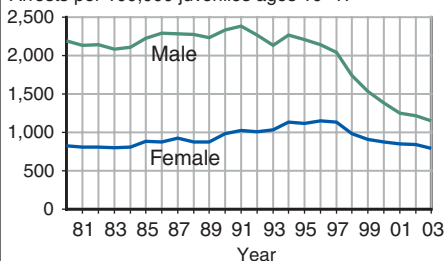
The juvenile arrest rate for larceny-theft fell in 2003 to its lowest level since at least 1980

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

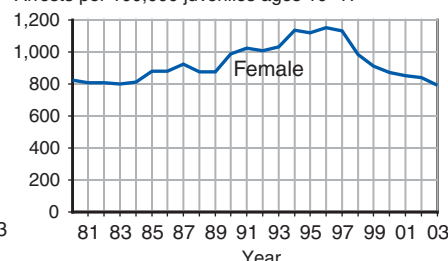


Larceny-theft arrest rate trends by gender and race

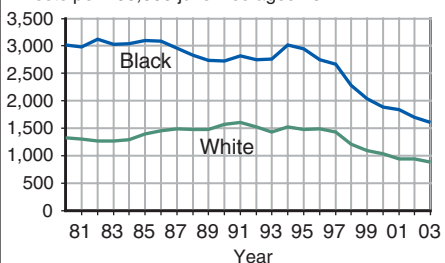
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



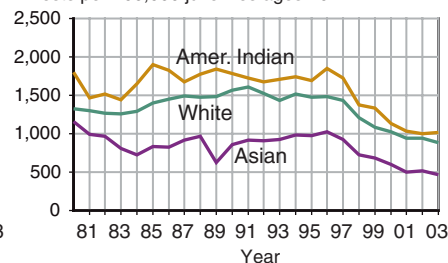
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



- The decline in the juvenile arrest rate for larceny-theft between 1994 and 2003 was similar in each of the four racial groups: white (42%), black (47%), American Indian (42%), and Asian (53%).

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

The juvenile arrest rate trend for motor vehicle theft differs from trends for burglary and larceny-theft

The juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft peaked in 1990

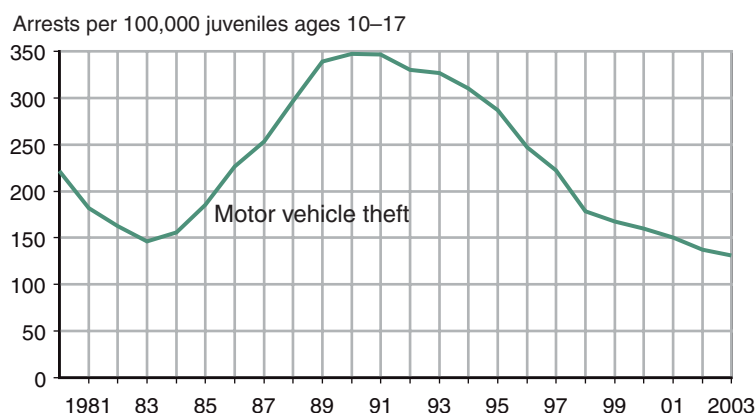
Juvenile arrest rates for motor vehicle theft fell to a low point in 1983 for males and females and for whites, blacks, and American Indians. (The Asian rate bottomed out in 1984.) After 1983, the juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft increased each year through 1990, resulting in a rate more than double (138% above) its 1983 level. After this period of rapid growth, the rate then fell through 2003, erasing the increase of the growth period and resulting in a 2003 rate 62% below the 1990 peak and 10% below the 1983 low point. Juveniles in 2003 were arrested for motor vehicle theft at a lower rate than at any time since at least 1980.

The juvenile arrest rate trends for motor vehicle theft differed from those for the other high-volume theft crimes of burglary and larceny-theft. In the 1980s and 1990s, the burglary arrest rate declined consistently and the larceny-theft rate remained relatively stable before dropping in the late 1990s, but the motor vehicle theft rate soared and then dropped dramatically. The motor vehicle theft arrest rate trend is somewhat similar to that of robbery, but the growth begins 5 years before that of robbery and peaks 5 years before the robbery peak.

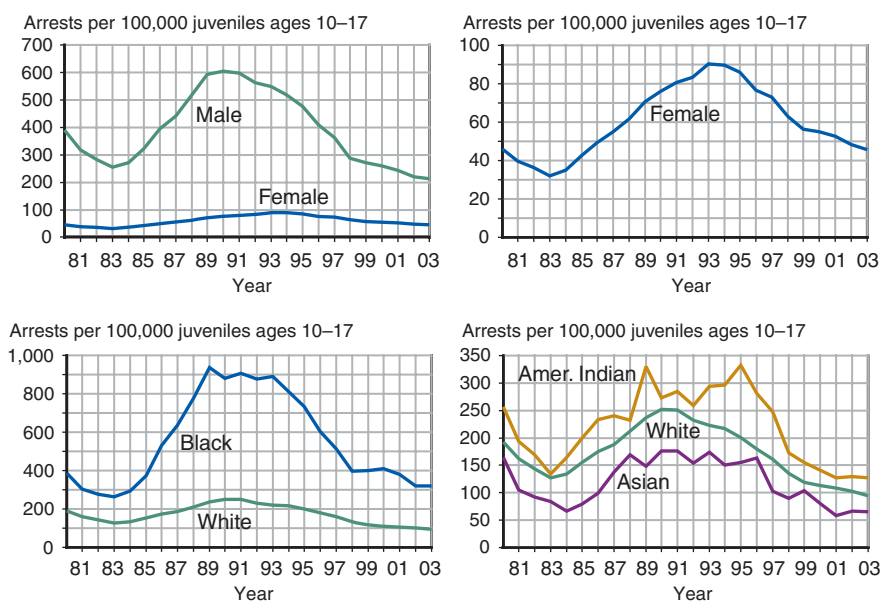
The motor vehicle theft arrest rate for white juveniles was at a 20-year low in 2003

The motor vehicle theft arrest rate for black juveniles grew far more than the rate for whites between 1983 and 1990 (233% vs. 98%). Beginning in the early 1990s, rates for both races declined substantially. By 2003, the white rate had fallen to a level 26% below its 1983 low, and the black rate was 22% above its 1983 low.

The juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft in 2003 was less than half the level a decade earlier



Motor vehicle theft arrest rate trends by gender and race



- Male and female juvenile arrest rates for motor vehicle theft displayed somewhat disparate trends. Both began increasing in 1984, but the male rate peaked in 1990, while the female rate did not peak until 1993. Although both declined thereafter, the male rate by 2003 had fallen to its lowest level since at least 1980, while the female rate was still 42% above its 1983 low point.

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

A high proportion of arrests for arson involve juveniles—including those ages 12 and younger

Over half of arrests for arson in 2003 involved juveniles

In 2003, 51% of all arrests for arson were of persons under age 18. Arson traditionally has been the criminal offense with the largest proportion of juvenile arrestees. It also has the largest percentage of young juvenile arrestees (ages 12 and under)—13% in 2003. In comparison, 28% of all larceny-theft arrests in 2003 involved juveniles, and 3% involved juveniles under age 13. One reason for arson arrests involving a high percentage of juveniles may be that firesetting is commonly considered an indicator of serious problems in youth who could benefit from the services available in the juvenile justice system.

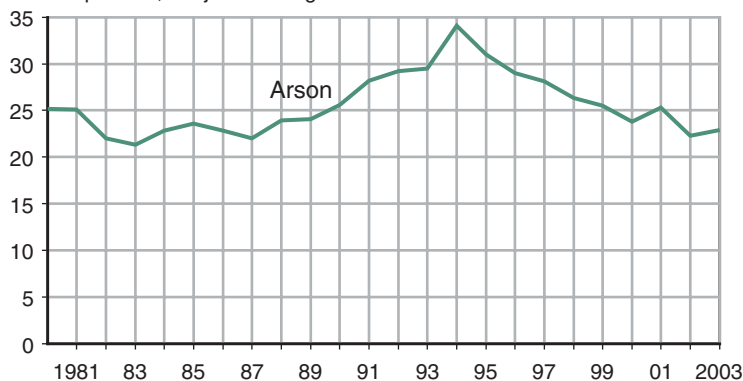
Trends in juvenile arson arrests paralleled that of violent crime

The pattern of growth and decline in the juvenile arrest rate for arson in the 1980s and thereafter was similar to the trends in juvenile violent crime arrest rates. Between 1983 and 1994, the juvenile arrest rate for arson increased 60%. Then it began to fall and by 2003 had declined to a point just 8% above its 1983 low.

One major distinction between violent crime and arson arrest rates for juveniles over this period was that white and black rates were similar for arson but not for violent crime. For example, in 2003, the arson arrest rate for white juveniles was 26 arrests for every 100,000 white youth ages 10–17 in the U.S. population and the rate for black juveniles was 25. In contrast, the violent crime arrest rate for black juveniles in 2003 was 4 times the white rate.

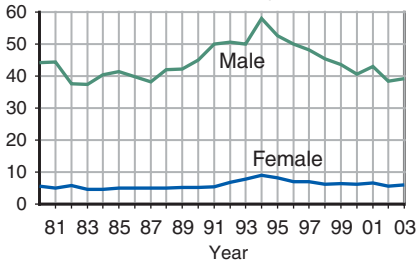
The juvenile arrest rate for arson in 2003 was back to the levels of the early 1980s

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

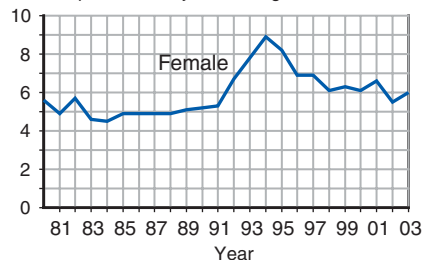


Arson arrest rate trends by gender and race

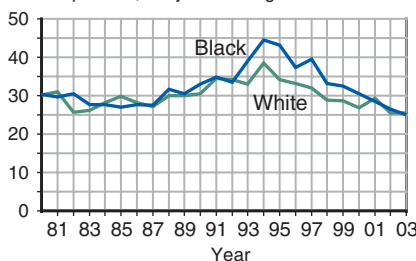
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



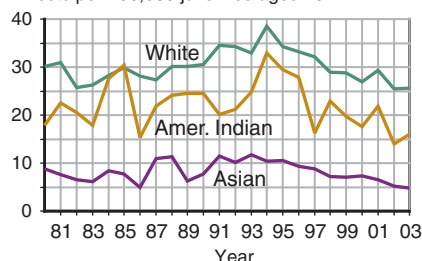
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



- In 2003, 12% of juveniles arrested for arson were female. Unlike males, their arrest rate for arson held constant during the 1980s and began to increase only in the early 1990s. Both male and female arrest rates peaked in 1994. By 2003, the male rate had returned to the levels of the early 1980s, while the female rate had not.

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

The juvenile arrest rate for simple assault more than doubled between 1980 and 2003—up 138%

A large proportion of juvenile arrests for assault are for less severe assaults

In contrast to aggravated assault, a simple assault does not involve the use of a weapon and does not result in serious bodily harm to the victim. Because simple assault is less severe, such incidents are less likely to be reported to law enforcement, and law enforcement has more discretion in how to handle the incident. Simple assault is the most common of all crimes against persons.

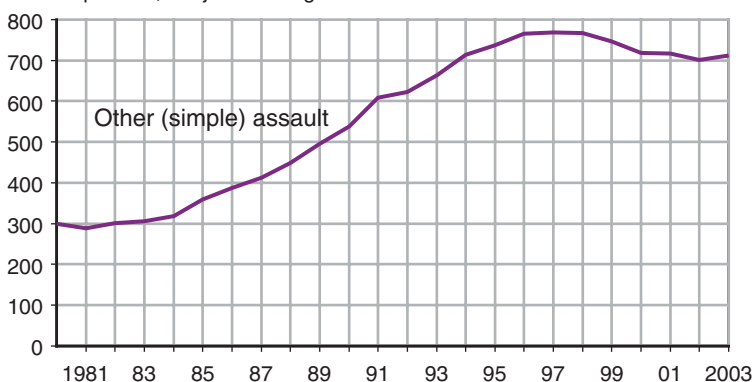
In 1980, there were 2 juvenile arrests for simple assault for every 1 juvenile arrest for aggravated assault; by 2003, this ratio had grown to 4 to 1—with most of this growth occurring after the mid-1990s. This means that a greater percentage of assaults handled by law enforcement in recent years has been for less serious offenses. This trend was found in arrests of male and female juveniles and of white, black, and American Indian juveniles. For example, in 1980, 66% of all juvenile male arrests for aggravated and simple assault were for simple assault; by 2003, this percentage had grown to 78%. Similarly, the female percentage grew from 74% to 84%.

Female arrests for simple assault grew far more than male arrests in recent years

As with aggravated assault, the increase in the juvenile female arrest rate for simple assault from 1980 to 2003 far outpaced the increase in the male rate (269% vs. 102%). From 1980 to 2003, simple assault arrest rates increased substantially for white (134%), black (134%), and American Indian (111%) youth; the rates for Asian youth also increased, but much less (23%).

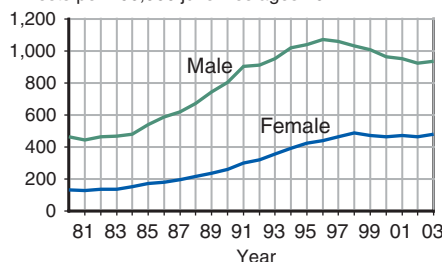
Unlike other crimes against persons, the juvenile arrest rate for simple assault did not decline substantially after the mid-1990s

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

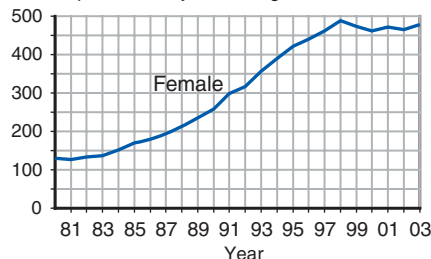


Other (simple) assault arrest rate trends by gender and race

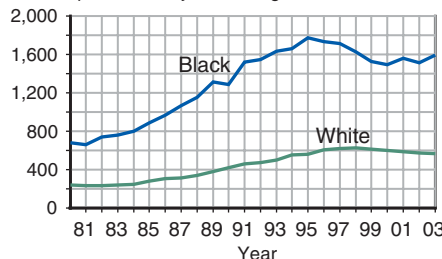
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



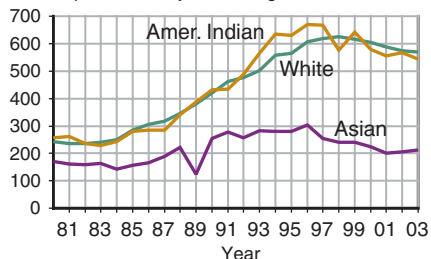
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



- The larger increase in simple assault arrests for juvenile females than for juvenile males between 1980 and 2003 was paralleled in adult arrests. Between 1980 and 2003, the female proportion of juvenile simple assault arrests grew from 21% to 32%, while the female proportion of adult simple assault arrests grew from 13% to 22%.

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

The juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations in 2003 was half its 1993 peak

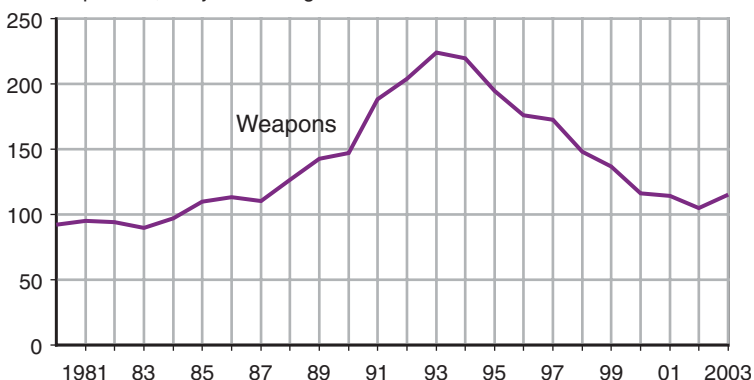
Juvenile arrests for weapons offenses grew throughout the 1980s and into the mid-1990s

The juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations grew 144% between 1980 and 1993; it then dropped 49% between 1993 and 2003, retreating to a level close to that of the mid-1980s. It must be remembered that these statistics do not reflect all arrests for weapons offenses. An unknown number of other arrests for more serious crimes also involved a weapons offense as a secondary charge, but the FBI's arrest statistics classifies such arrests by their most serious charge and not the weapons offense.

The pattern of large growth and then decline in juvenile arrest rates for weapons offenses over the 1980–2003 period occurred in the rates for males, females, and each racial group. In general, the decline almost balanced out the increase. Overall, the 2003 juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations was 18% above its 1980 level. This pattern of a moderately higher juvenile arrest rate in 2003 than in 1980 was true for male (18%), white (26%), and black (27%) juveniles; the 2003 arrest rates for American Indian and Asian youth were actually below their 1980 levels. The one major exception to this pattern was the arrest rate for juvenile females. Between 1980 and 1993, the juvenile female arrest rate for weapons law violations increased almost 248%. This rate also generally declined between 1993 and 2003, but the decline was far less than that for the other juvenile subgroups. As a result, in 2003, the juvenile female arrest rate for weapons law violations was 147% above its 1980 level.

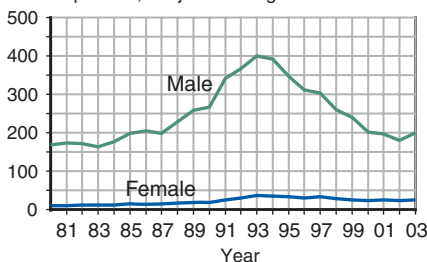
The juvenile arrest rate trend for weapons law violations generally paralleled the trends in juvenile violent crime arrests

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

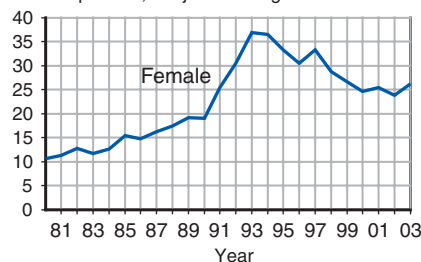


Weapons law violation arrest rate trends by gender and race

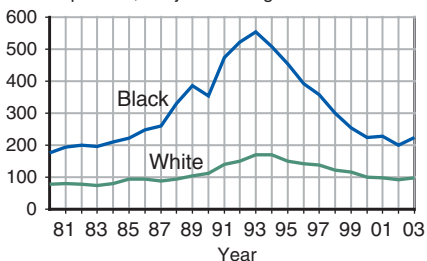
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



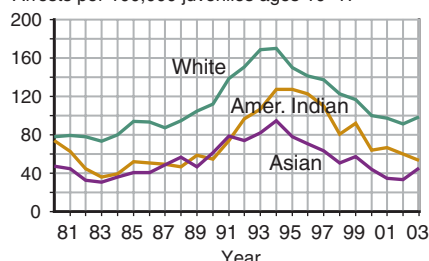
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



- In 1980, the black juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations was 2.3 times the white rate. Between 1980 and 1993, the rate increased more for blacks than whites (214% vs. 116%); however, the larger decline in the black rate between 1993 and 2003 (59% vs. 42% for whites) returned the rate ratio back to its 1980 level.

Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

The juvenile drug arrest rate climbed 77% between 1993 and 1997 but has declined some since then

Racial disparity in drug arrests increased in the 1980s and early 1990s

The annual juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations (a category that includes both drug possession and drug sales) varied within a limited range between 1980 and 1993. This consistency in drug arrest rates contrasts with the large decline in self-reported use of marijuana and other illicit drugs during the period.

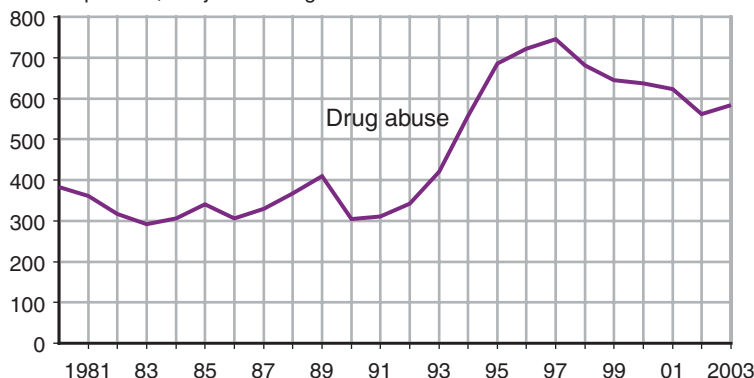
A closer look at juvenile drug arrest rate trends over the period finds sharp racial differences. The white rate fell 28% between 1980 and 1993, compared with a 231% increase for blacks. In 1980, the white and black arrest rates were essentially equal, with black youth involved in 15% of all juvenile drug arrests. By 1993, the black rate was over four times the white rate, and black youth were involved in 46% of all juvenile drug arrests.

Drug arrests soared for all youth between 1993 and 1997

In contrast to the 1980–1993 period, the overall juvenile drug arrest rate increased by 77% in the short period between 1993 and 1997. Large increases were also seen in the rates of juvenile subgroups: male (72%), female (119%), white (109%), American Indian (160%), and Asian (105%). The black juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations, which had increased dramatically in the earlier period, increased an additional 25% between 1993 and 1997. Between 1997 and 2003, the juvenile drug arrest rate fell marginally (22%), with most of the overall decline attributable to a drop in arrests of blacks (41%) and males (24%).

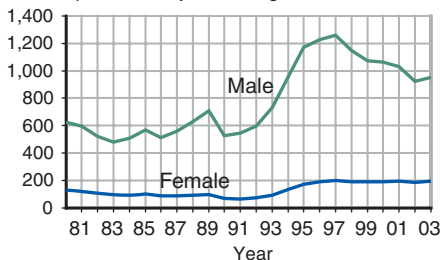
The surge in the juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations between 1993 and 1997 occurred during a period when the juvenile violent crime arrest rate was declining

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

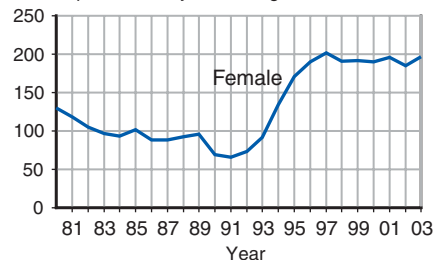


Drug abuse violation arrest rate trends by gender and race

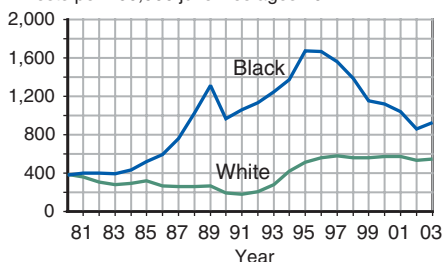
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



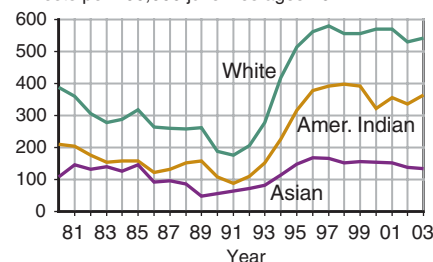
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Source: Authors' analyses of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. [See arrest rate source note at the end of this chapter for details.]

The attributes of juvenile and adult violence differ when viewed from the perspective of law enforcement

Juvenile violence is less likely than adult violence to involve female victims and firearms

Based on an analysis of the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) for 2001, the characteristics of violent crimes allegedly committed by juvenile offenders and by adult offenders show large differences in the types of victims, the location of the crime, and weapon possession. For example, violent crimes committed by juvenile offenders were far more likely to have juvenile victims than were violent crimes committed by adults: robberies (42% vs. 6%), aggravated

assaults (53% vs. 9%), and simple assaults (61% vs. 10%). Robberies by juvenile offenders were less likely to involve strangers than were robberies by adults (66% vs. 73%), while the proportions of strangers involved did not differ in assaults committed by juvenile offenders and by adult offenders.

Violent crimes known to law enforcement and committed by adults were more likely to have female victims than were violent crimes committed by juveniles: robberies (29% vs. 22%), aggravated assaults (42% vs. 35%), and simple assaults (64%

vs. 47%). Firearms were more common in violent crimes committed by adults: robberies (49% vs. 35%) and aggravated assaults (19% vs. 14%). Roughly equal proportions of victims were injured in violent crimes committed by juveniles and by adults: robberies (67% vs. 68%), aggravated assaults (42% vs. 38%), and simple assaults (51% vs. 47%).

Robberies committed by juveniles were more likely to occur outdoors than those committed by adults (46% vs. 28%). The same pattern held for aggravated assault (41% vs. 21%) and simple assault (22% vs. 10%).

Family members were the victim in a greater proportion of assaults committed by juvenile females than by juvenile males

Characteristics	Robbery offender				Aggravated assault offender				Simple assault offender			
	Juvenile		Adult		Juvenile		Adult		Juvenile		Adult	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Victim type												
Juvenile family	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	7%	3%	6%	5%	5%	4%	7%
Juvenile acquaintance	22	29	2	2	45	40	4	4	54	49	4	5
Juvenile stranger	20	15	5	3	6	2	1	1	5	3	1	1
Adult family	0	1	1	2	12	21	21	25	17	23	34	32
Adult acquaintance	10	19	23	36	21	24	54	56	16	17	50	50
Adult stranger	47	35	70	57	12	6	16	7	4	3	7	5
Victim gender												
Female	19	56	28	40	26	67	43	40	32	78	69	47
Male	81	44	72	60	74	33	57	60	68	22	31	53
Location												
Residence	16	20	20	23	42	54	58	65	40	46	72	71
Outdoors	46	39	28	23	33	23	22	17	23	20	11	10
School	4	5	0	0	12	10	1	1	26	22	1	1
Commercial	34	37	52	54	13	12	20	17	12	12	17	18
Weapon												
Firearm	36	22	51	31	17	4	21	9	0	0	0	0
Personal	42	56	27	37	25	30	27	20	82	85	84	83
Other	13	14	15	22	56	64	50	69	8	6	5	6
None	9	8	8	10	2	2	2	2	10	10	11	11
Injury?												
Injury	68	54	69	62	43	37	39	36	52	50	46	49
No injury	32	46	31	38	57	63	61	64	48	50	54	51

- Of the aggravated assault victims of juvenile females, 28% were family members, compared with 16% of the victims of juvenile males. Similarly, 28% of the simple assault victims of juvenile females were family members, compared with 22% of the victims of juvenile males. This female-male disparity is present in aggravated assaults committed by adults, but not in their simple assaults.

- Schools were the location in 4% of robberies, 12% of aggravated assaults, and 26% of simple assaults committed by male juveniles; for females, schools were the location in 5%, 10%, and 22% of the respective crimes.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *National Incident-Based Reporting System master file* for 2001 [machine-readable data file].

Clearance figures implicate juveniles in 1 in 12 murders, 1 in 8 forcible rapes, and 1 in 7 robberies in 2003

Clearances give insight into the relative involvement of juveniles and adults in crime

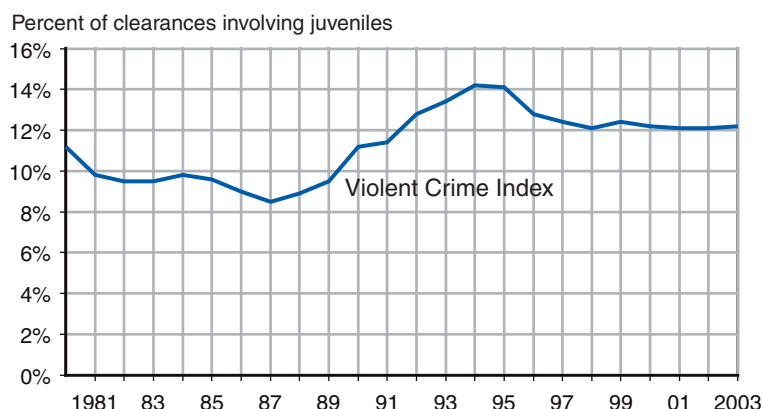
Clearance statistics measure the proportion of reported crimes that are resolved by an arrest or other, exceptional means (e.g., death of the offender, unwillingness of the victim to cooperate). A single arrest may result in many clearances if the arrestee committed several crimes. Or multiple arrests may result in a single clearance if the crime was committed by a group of offenders. The FBI reports information on the proportion of clearances that involved offenders under age 18. This statistic is a better indicator of the proportion of crime committed by this age group than is the arrest proportion, although there are some concerns that even the clearance statistic overestimates the juvenile proportion of crimes. Nevertheless, trends in clearance proportions are reasonable indicators of changes in the relative involvement of juveniles in various crimes.

The juvenile share of violent crime remains above the levels of the 1980s

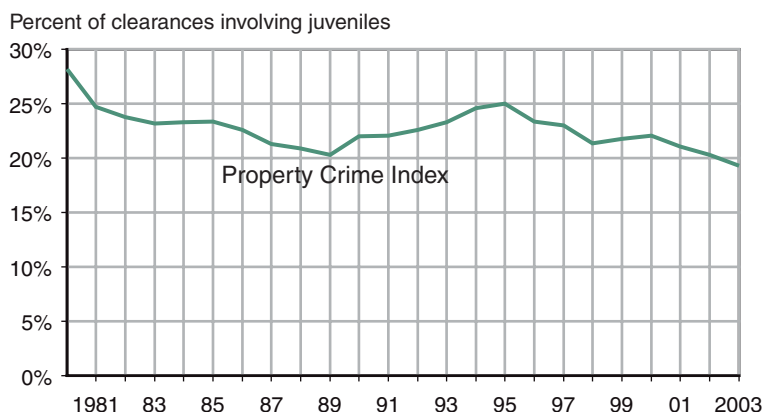
The FBI's *Crime in the United States* series shows that the proportion of violent crimes attributed to juveniles declined somewhat in recent years—but is still above the levels of the 1980s. The juvenile proportion of Violent Crime Index offenses cleared by arrest (or exceptional means) grew from an average of 9% in the 1980s to 14% in 1994, then fell to 12% in 1997, where it remained through 2003. Based on these data, it is fair to say a juvenile committed 1 in 8 violent crimes known to law enforcement in 2003.

Each of the four Violent Crime Index offenses showed an increase in juvenile clearances between 1980 and

After increasing in the mid-1980s to mid-1990s, the juvenile proportion of violent crimes cleared by arrest or exceptional means did not return to its earlier levels



The juvenile share of property crime has fallen substantially since 1980

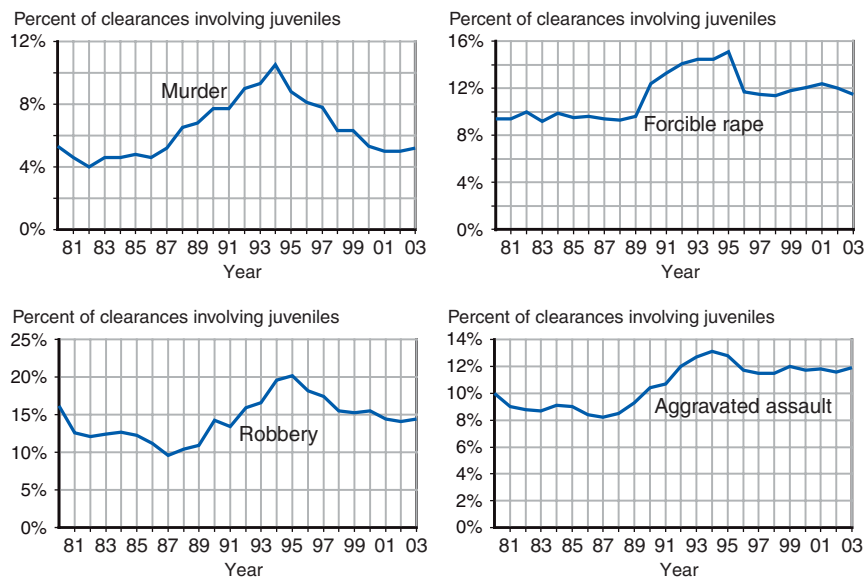


Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the years 1980 through 2003.

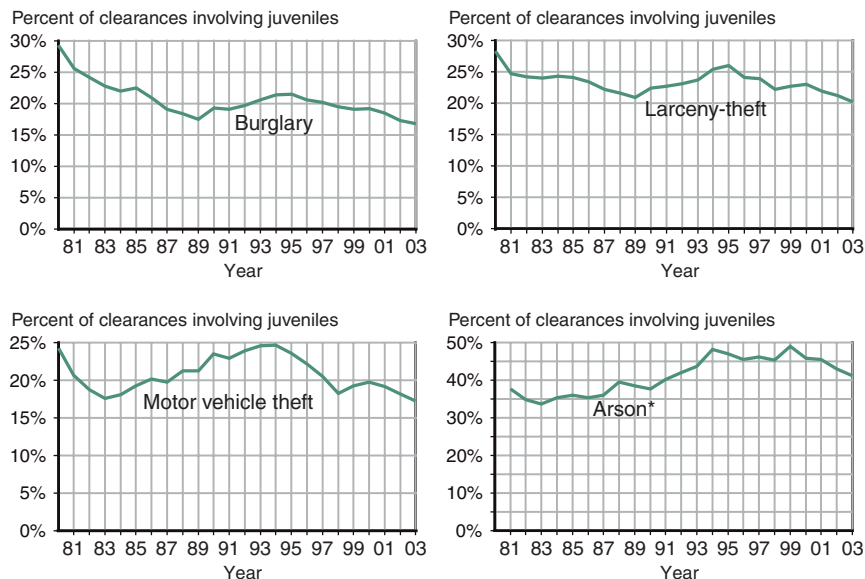
the mid-1990s. The juvenile proportion of murder clearances peaked in 1994 at 10% and then fell. Between 2000 and 2003, the proportion was 5%—the lowest since 1987. The juvenile proportion of cleared forcible rapes peaked in 1995 (15%) and then fell; however, the 2003 proportion (12%) was still above the levels of the 1980s (9%). The juvenile proportion of robbery clearances also

peaked in 1995 (20%); it fell substantially by 2003 (to 14%) but was still above the average level of the 1980s (12%). The trend in the juvenile proportion of aggravated assault clearances differed from the others. In 2003 (at 12%), it was slightly below its peak in 1994 (13%) and substantially above the average level of the 1980s (9%).

Clearance statistics imply that juvenile involvement in each of the violent offenses in 2003 was less than it was 10 years earlier



In 2003, the juvenile shares of clearances for burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft were at their lowest points in more than 20 years



*Arson clearance data were first reported in 1981.

Source: Authors' analyses of the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the years 1980 through 2003.

In 2003, a juvenile committed roughly 1 in 5 property crimes known to law enforcement

In the 1980s, the juvenile proportion of cleared Property Crime Index offenses decreased from 28% to 20%. This proportion then increased in the early 1990s, peaking in 1995 at 25%. After 1995, the juvenile proportion of clearances for Property Crime Index offenses fell, so that by 2003 it was at its lowest level since at least 1980 (19%).

By 2003, juvenile clearance proportions for the crimes of burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft were at their lowest levels since 1980 (17%, 20%, and 17%, respectively). For arson, the juvenile proportion of clearances in 2003 was equal to its average for the 1980–2003 period.

The juvenile proportion of crimes cleared varied with community

In 2003, in nonmetropolitan areas (average population served per law enforcement agency about 10,000), 9.8% of Violent Crime Index clearances were attributed to juvenile arrest. In comparison, for communities located in metropolitan areas but outside of cities (average population served 37,000), the proportion was 12.7%. In small cities (average population served 3,000), the proportion was 14.6%, and in somewhat larger cities (average population served 35,000) it was 14.9%. Then, as city size increased, the proportion fell: in cities with populations over 1 million, for example, 9.0% of Violent Crime Index clearances were attributed to juvenile arrest. Property Crime Index clearances had a similar pattern.

In 2003, about one-fourth of the states had a juvenile violent crime arrest rate above the national average

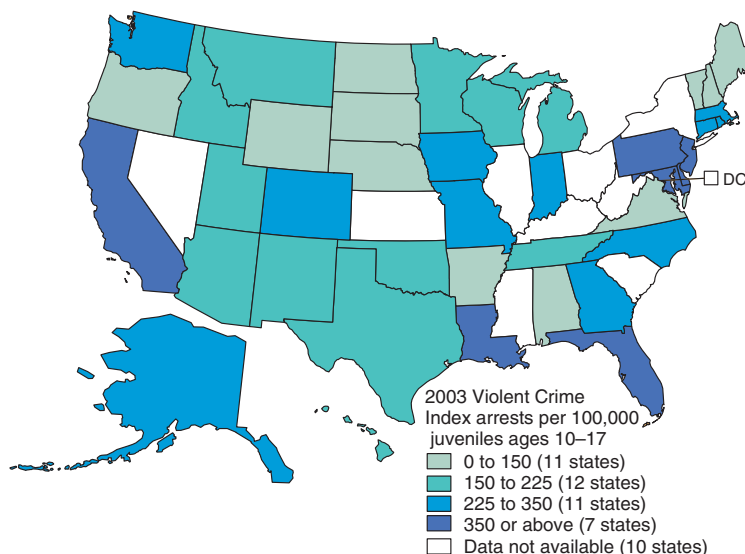
Among states with at least minimally adequate reporting, those with high juvenile violent crime arrest rates in 2003 were Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and California

State	Reporting population coverage	Arrests of juveniles under age 18 per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17					State	Reporting population coverage	Arrests of juveniles under age 18 per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17				
		Violent Crime Index	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Other assault	Weapons			Violent Crime Index	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Other assault	Weapons
United States	76%	291	77	198	738	116	Missouri	97%	295	64	214	1,111	87
Alabama	91	126	43	73	470	31	Montana	60	202	33	161	561	32
Alaska	97	243	28	180	557	85	Nebraska	86	96	28	59	848	83
Arizona	96	223	45	171	768	72	Nevada	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Arkansas	66	130	22	102	348	64	New Hampshire	69	71	22	43	717	9
California	99	364	111	243	529	181	New Jersey	93	386	144	233	654	214
Colorado	71	231	48	167	756	168	New Mexico	55	220	33	178	673	174
Connecticut	65	290	84	190	946	90	New York	45	264	90	161	449	70
Delaware	99	595	163	403	1,579	147	North Carolina	79	310	95	199	1,023	179
Dist. of Columbia	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	North Dakota	85	45	10	20	600	33
Florida	100	524	99	404	993	109	Ohio	49	150	46	84	774	70
Georgia	54	266	81	169	838	153	Oklahoma	100	217	30	171	390	81
Hawaii	100	197	101	82	814	36	Oregon	91	149	34	105	503	53
Idaho	94	160	11	136	849	122	Pennsylvania	84	402	139	239	734	123
Illinois	23	944	342	552	2,114	383	Rhode Island	100	288	62	179	970	160
Indiana	74	317	36	273	444	28	South Carolina	13	47	10	33	307	73
Iowa	90	251	29	214	816	45	South Dakota	86	108	1	88	516	82
Kansas	48	131	12	107	868	25	Tennessee	84	223	51	157	767	100
Kentucky	26	229	47	175	394	56	Texas	94	185	46	123	793	64
Louisiana	73	355	64	267	1,357	61	Utah	72	216	17	175	804	183
Maine	100	78	11	53	762	26	Vermont	77	81	0	62	347	11
Maryland	100	505	184	305	1,444	224	Virginia	75	106	33	64	676	88
Massachusetts	70	269	40	219	387	28	Washington	74	246	60	152	1,013	113
Michigan	96	166	31	118	321	53	West Virginia	45	40	2	34	157	7
Minnesota	83	176	29	121	648	102	Wisconsin	76	184	36	121	558	176
Mississippi	48	136	49	58	711	70	Wyoming	95	88	4	79	1,062	80

NA = Arrest counts were not available for this state in the FBI's *Crime in the United States 2003*.

Notes: Arrest rates for jurisdictions with less than complete reporting may not be representative of the entire state. In the state map, rates were classified as "Data not available" when law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over more than 50% of the state's population did not report. Readers should consult the related technical note at the end of the chapter.

Source: Authors' analysis of arrest data from the FBI's *Crime in the United States 2003* and population data from the National Center for Health Statistics' *Estimates of the July 1, 2000–July 1, 2003, United States resident population from the vintage 2003 postcensal series by year, county, age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin* [machine-readable data files].



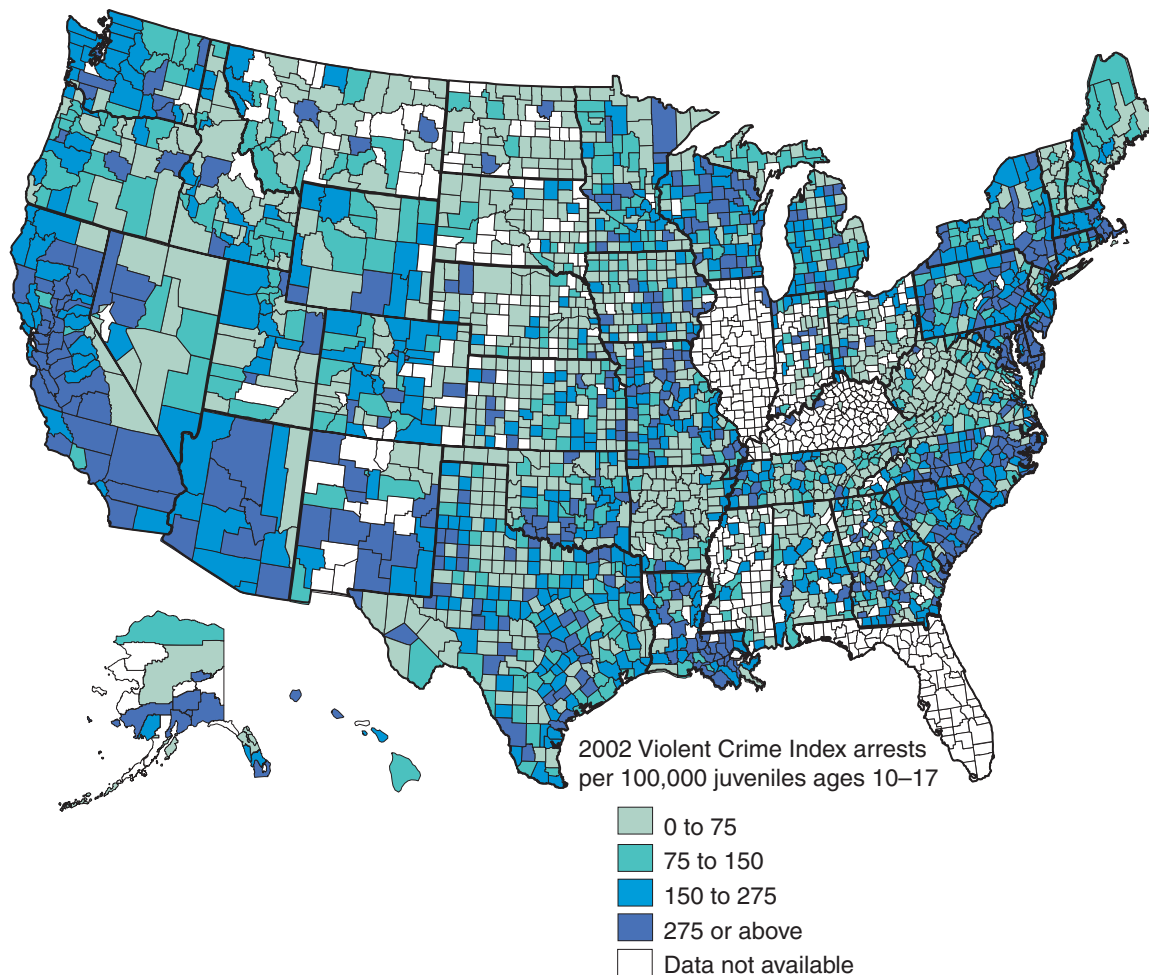
High violent crime arrest rates are found in a relatively small proportion of counties

In 2002, the national juvenile arrest rate for offenses included in the Violent Crime Index was 291 arrests of persons under age 18 for every 100,000 persons ages 10–17 in the U.S. population. In 2,544 of the 3,141 counties in the U.S. in 2002, law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over at least 50% of their county's population reported arrest counts;

arrest rates were calculated only for these counties. Seventeen percent (17%) of these counties had a juvenile violent crime arrest rate higher than the U.S. average. Six in 10 (58%) reporting counties had rates less than half the U.S. average, half had juvenile violent crime arrest rates less than 115 (making that the median rate), and nearly one-fourth

of counties reported no juvenile violent crime arrests at all for the year. However, the fact that high rates of juvenile violent crime arrests are found in counties with small populations as well as in counties with large populations indicates that high levels of juvenile violence can occur in any community.

Juvenile violent crime arrest rates varied considerably among counties within a state in 2002



Note: Rates were classified as "Data not available" when agencies with jurisdiction over more than 50% of the county's population did not report.

Source: Authors' analysis of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research's *Uniform Crime Reporting Program data [United States]: County-level detailed arrest and offense data, 2002* [machine-readable data file].

High juvenile property crime arrest rates in 2003 did not necessarily mean high violent crime arrest rates

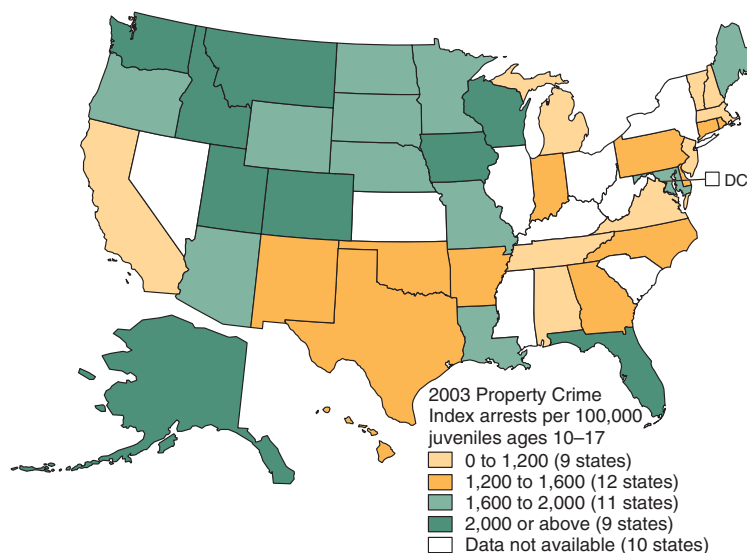
The states of Wisconsin, Utah, Alaska, Montana, Idaho, Florida, Washington, and Colorado reported the highest juvenile Property Crime Index arrest rates in 2003

State	Reporting population coverage	Arrests of juveniles under age 18 per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17					State	Reporting population coverage	Arrests of juveniles under age 18 per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17				
		Property Crime Index	Burglary	Larceny-theft	Motor vehicle theft	Vandalism			Property Crime Index	Burglary	Larceny-theft	Motor vehicle theft	Vandalism
United States	76%	1,442	271	1,012	136	310	Missouri	97%	1,728	271	1,232	193	502
Alabama	91	764	123	593	44	104	Montana	60	2,175	164	1,818	156	558
Alaska	97	2,202	344	1,600	229	359	Nebraska	86	1,820	196	1,494	87	605
Arizona	96	1,774	251	1,304	195	440	Nevada	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Arkansas	66	1,282	225	1,025	23	132	New Hampshire	69	674	93	57	43	275
California	99	1,180	326	678	153	302	New Jersey	93	934	188	66	50	396
Colorado	71	2,051	218	1,539	247	428	New Mexico	55	1,367	168	1,116	69	199
Connecticut	65	1,347	218	1,008	102	293	New York	45	1,218	268	847	79	417
Delaware	99	1,583	328	1,131	92	290	North Carolina	79	1,582	351	1,115	97	308
Dist. of Columbia	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	North Dakota	85	1,866	185	1,479	177	649
Florida	100	2,128	501	1,405	207	167	Ohio	49	1,222	231	897	68	296
Georgia	54	1,411	239	1,017	132	126	Oklahoma	100	1,591	269	1,191	100	156
Hawaii	100	1,387	178	1,056	149	214	Oregon	91	1,721	259	1,284	115	512
Idaho	94	2,158	246	1,751	111	427	Pennsylvania	84	1,222	233	765	197	452
Illinois	23	2,074	349	900	811	454	Rhode Island	100	1,372	233	985	109	583
Indiana	74	1,219	141	966	97	232	South Carolina	13	214	67	139	7	59
Iowa	90	2,099	278	1,697	100	552	South Dakota	86	1,743	234	1,434	62	279
Kansas	48	1,055	211	752	71	318	Tennessee	84	1,064	178	776	93	219
Kentucky	26	1,435	232	1,130	56	185	Texas	94	1,282	227	955	84	206
Louisiana	73	1,842	389	1,362	77	363	Utah	72	2,511	174	2,166	126	644
Maine	100	1,866	314	1,423	99	406	Vermont	77	559	160	338	42	215
Maryland	100	1,950	411	1,135	348	391	Virginia	75	844	161	605	54	177
Massachusetts	70	512	106	355	40	136	Washington	74	2,088	354	1,565	127	416
Michigan	96	947	144	725	66	145	West Virginia	45	382	72	266	44	78
Minnesota	83	1,860	210	1,513	108	426	Wisconsin	76	2,813	338	2,247	199	713
Mississippi	48	1,497	296	1,075	69	148	Wyoming	95	1,885	175	1,616	82	368

NA = Arrest counts were not available for this state in the FBI's *Crime in the United States 2003*.

Notes: Arrest rates for jurisdictions with less than complete reporting may not be representative of the entire state. In the state map, rates were classified as "Data not available" when law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over more than 50% of their state's population did not report. Readers should consult the related technical note at the end of the chapter.

Source: Authors' analysis of arrest data from the FBI's *Crime in the United States 2003* and population data from the National Center for Health Statistics' *Estimates of the July 1, 2000–July 1, 2003, United States resident population from the vintage 2003 postcensal series by year, county, age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin* [machine-readable data files].



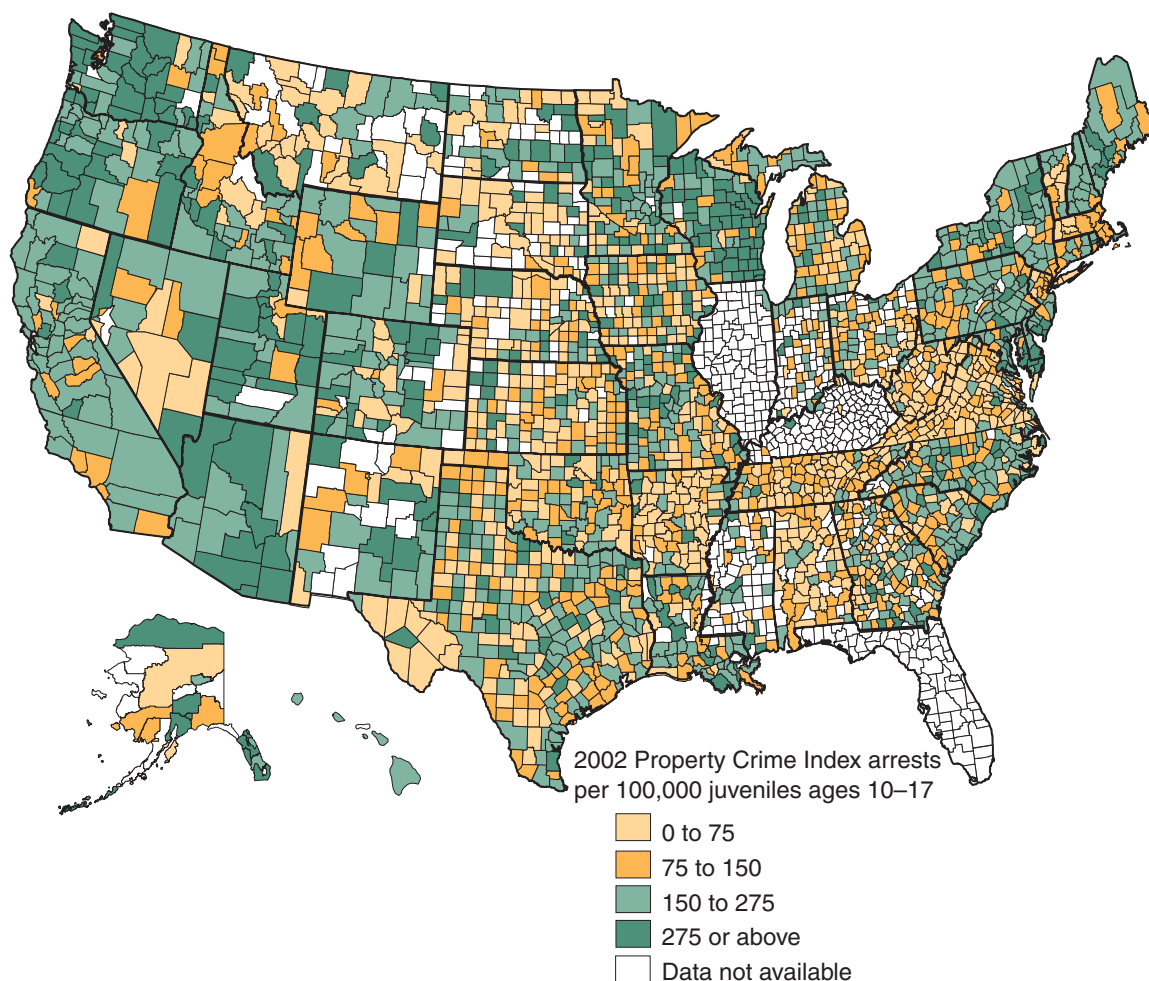
Property Crime Index arrest rates are a barometer of the flow of youth into the juvenile justice system

The Property Crime Index is dominated by the high-volume crime category of larceny-theft. For juveniles, shoplifting is the most common offense in this category and it is generally considered to be far less serious than other crimes in the Index such as home burglary, auto theft,

and arson. Therefore, to assess the nature of juvenile property crimes within a jurisdiction, it is important to consider the various offense categories individually. Nevertheless, many still use the juvenile Property Crime Index arrest rate as a barometer of the flow of juveniles into the

juvenile justice system. In 2002, the national juvenile property crime arrest rate was 1,442. More than 7 in 10 reporting counties had rates below the national average. Half of all reporting counties had rates below 924 (i.e., the median rate).

In 2002, counties within a state varied considerably in their juvenile Property Crime Index arrest rates



Note: Rates were classified as “Data not available” when agencies with jurisdiction over more than 50% of the county’s population did not report.

Source: Authors’ analysis of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research’s *Uniform Crime Reporting Program data [United States]: County-level detailed arrest and offense data, 2002* [machine-readable data file].

What do police do with the juveniles they arrest?

Many large law enforcement agencies have specialized units that concentrate on juvenile justice issues

The Bureau of Justice Statistics' Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics data collection for 2000 describes more than 800 state and local law enforcement agencies with 100 or more full-time sworn personnel. Among these larger law enforcement agencies are 501 municipal police departments, 222 sheriff's offices, 32 county police departments, and the 49 primary state law enforcement agencies. Together, these agencies employed approximately 402,000 full-time sworn personnel, including 241,000 uniformed officers assigned to respond to calls for service.

The 2000 survey included items about the types of special units agencies operated. Local law enforcement agencies operated a variety of full-time special units to address youth and family problems. For example, most local law enforcement agencies (i.e., county police departments and municipal police departments) had a special unit for drug education in schools (70%). Units targeting juvenile crime were

also very common among local agencies (62%). About half of law enforcement agencies had gang units and units dealing with various types of child victimization. Among state agencies, the most common types of units were those for drug education in schools (39%) and missing children (31%).

Percent of agencies operating special units:

Special unit	Type of agency	
	Local	State
Drug education in schools	70%	39%
Juvenile crime	62	10
Gangs	45	18
Child abuse	46	8
Domestic violence	45	10
Missing children	48	31
Youth outreach	33	6

Most arrested juveniles were referred to court

In 13 states, statutes define some persons younger than age 18 as adults for prosecution purposes. These persons are not under the original jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system, but are under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system. For arrested youth who are

younger than 18 and under the original jurisdiction of their state's juvenile justice system, the FBI's UCR Program monitors what happens as a result of the arrest. This is the only aspect of the UCR data collection that is sensitive to state variations in the legal definition of a juvenile.

In 2003, 20% of arrests involving youth eligible in their state for processing in the juvenile justice system were handled within law enforcement agencies, 71% were referred to juvenile court, and 7% were referred directly to criminal court. The others were referred to a welfare agency or to another police agency. The proportion of juvenile arrests referred to juvenile court increased from 1980 to 2003 (from 58% to 71%).

In 2003, juvenile arrests were less likely to result in referral to juvenile court in large cities (population over 250,000) than in moderate size cities (population 100,000–250,000) or small cities (population less than 100,000). In large cities, 67% of juvenile arrests resulted in referral to juvenile court, compared with 74% in moderate size cities and 71% in small cities.

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Technical note

Although juvenile arrest rates may largely reflect juvenile behavior, comparisons of juvenile arrest rates across jurisdictions should be made with caution because many other factors can affect the magnitude of arrest rates. Arrest rates are calculated by dividing the number of youth arrests made in the year by the number of youth living in the jurisdiction. In general, jurisdictions that arrest a relatively large number of nonresident juveniles would have higher arrest rates than jurisdictions where resident youth behave similarly. For example, jurisdictions (especially small ones) that are vacation destinations or that are centers for economic activity in a

region may have arrest rates that reflect the behavior of nonresident youth more than that of resident youth. Other factors that influence arrest rates in a given area include the attitudes of citizens toward crime, the policies of local law enforcement agencies, and the policies of other components of the justice system. Finally, in many counties, not all law enforcement agencies report their arrest data to the FBI; because a county's rate is based on data from reporting agencies, that rate may not accurately reflect the entire county's actual arrest rate (e.g., when a large urban police department does not report).

Arrest rate source note

Authors' analysis of arrest data from unpublished FBI reports for 1980 through 1997 and from the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the years 1998 through 2003; population data for the years 1980 through 1989 from the U.S. Census Bureau's *U.S. population estimates by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin: 1980 to 1999* [machine-readable data files]; population data for the years 1990 through 1999 from the National Center for Health Statistics' *Bridged-race intercensal estimates of the July 1, 1990–July 1, 1999 United States resident population by county, single-year of age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin* [machine-readable data files]; and population data for the years 2000 through 2003 from the National Center for Health Statistics' *Estimates of the July 1, 2000–July 1, 2003, United States resident population from the vintage 2003 postcensal series by year, county, age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin* [machine-readable data files].

